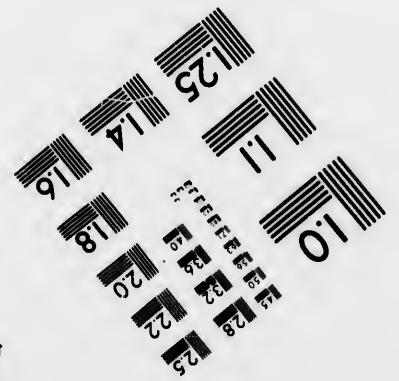
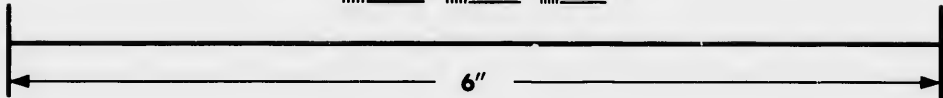
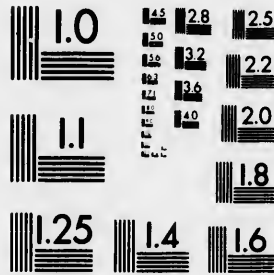


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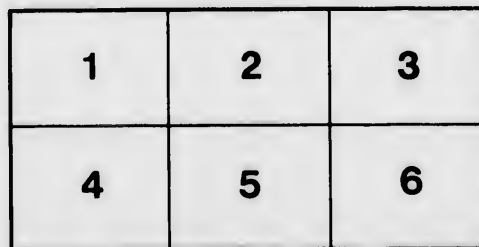
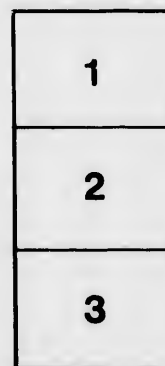
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Andrew W. Williams

“What Harm is there in it?”

BY BYRON LAING.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
REV. W. H. WITHROW, D.D.

AND
A PAPER ON “ECCLESIASTICAL AMUSEMENTS,”
BY REV. DR. MARVIN, OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
LOCKPORT, N.Y.

“Abstain from all appearance of evil.”

SECOND EDITION—REVISED AND ENLARGED.

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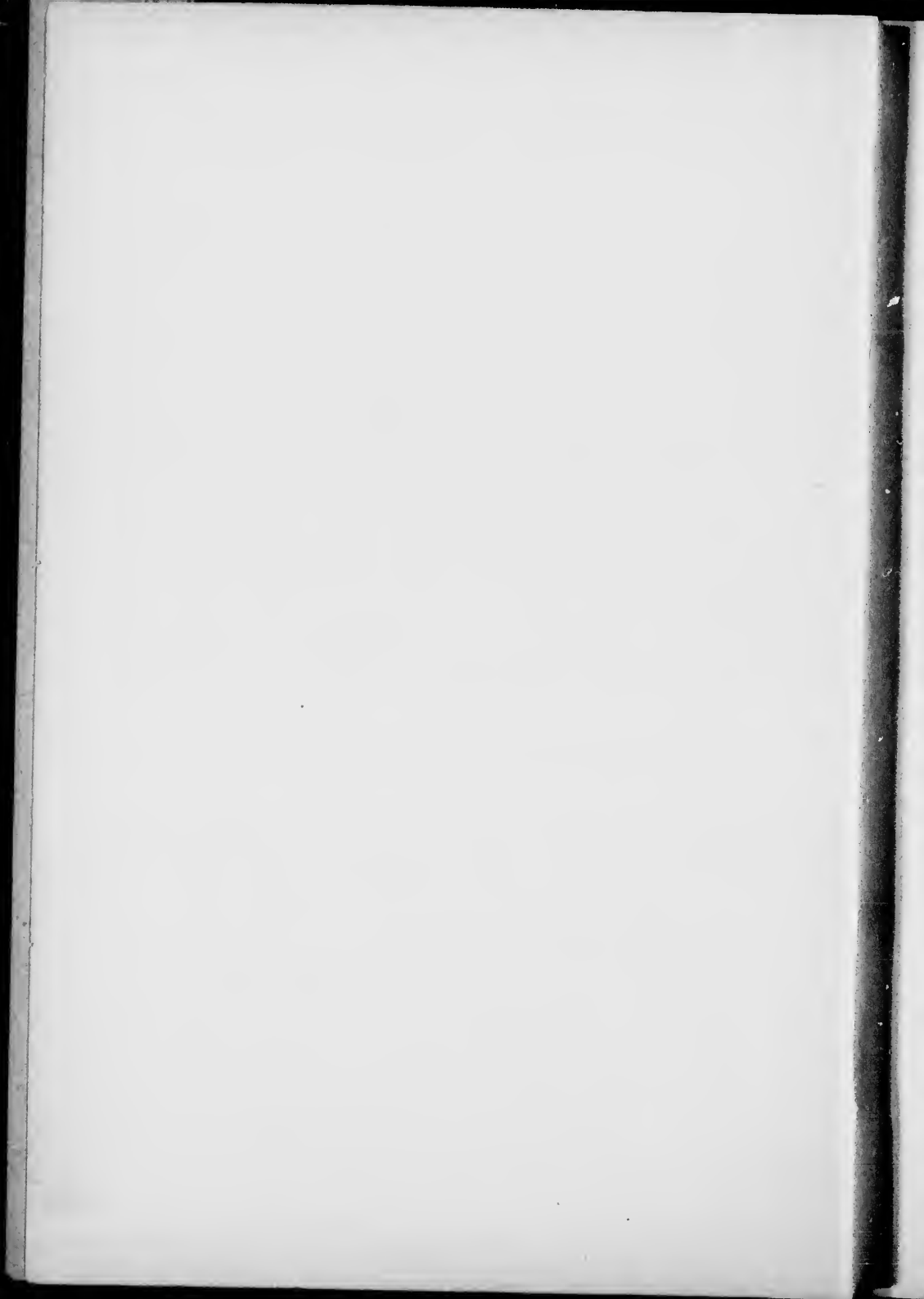
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PREFACE.

To GET good by doing good is the aim of the writer. We do not know that we have chosen the most popular themes; but they are important, inasmuch as they affect seriously that which is of the greatest importance. We have aimed simply to tell the truth, and to tell it in love. That "by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be established," we have gleaned from every source such testimony as might conduce to our purpose, and are thankful for the voice of so many able Christian men. We pray God's blessing upon our readers, and may His Kingdom be speedily set up in all the earth.

THE AUTHOR.



INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE pleasure in complying with the request to write an introduction to this modest book. I am in hearty sympathy with the purpose of the writer. The lessons of these seven chapters need to be over and over repeated. The Church is shorn of much of its strength through its conformity to the world, the fashion whereof passeth away. We need a return, in spirit if not in form, to the godly simplicity of early Methodism and early Christianity. We need to sedulously avoid all foolish and hurtful practices, which mar the beauty and impair the strength of Christian character and Christian influence. In the days of its primitive purity the Church won its mightiest triumphs. When it became allied with power and moulded by pride it speedily lost its purity of life and energy of action. In an age of increased

luxury and wealth and love of ease and pleasure, the followers of Jesus must, like their Master, be meek and lowly in spirit. Thus shall the winsome influence of true religion be forever a spell of power to woo the hearts of men from earth to heaven. We commend this little volume to the thoughtful consideration of all to whom it may come, trusting that its teaching may help to the realization of a nobler ideal of Christian life.

W. H. W.

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“What Harm is there in it?”

CHAPTER I.

SIGNIFICANCE OF “LITTLE THINGS.”

“Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth.”

NOTHING should be thought incapable of great influence, either for good or evil, simply because *small*. A Canada thistle seed is but a mite, but there, in embryo, is a harvest which no man can calculate. How small a thing is a thought, a look, a motion! Yet there is a significance either for good or evil in all that we think or do. Some of the greatest discoveries

and inventions that have blessed our race, had their origin in things that thousands would pass by as too insignificant for a moment's reflection. The art of printing, electricity, application of steam, the telescope, and numerous other appliances, which contribute so much to the progress of civilization, are the results of things which to many would seem as "child's play." But in magnitude of importance, who can measure these "trifles"? Do they not still live, and are not their benefits gone out into all the earth?

So with a multitude of agencies in the history of the Church. At first obscure, they have gradually brightened into untold blessings. Look at the British and Foreign Bible Society—beloved by millions because of blessings sent to their homes—and the American Bible Society, and the whole beautiful cluster of sister institutions throughout the world, "which are so many trees of life bearing the golden fruits of immortality among all the nations of the earth." This mighty river of blessing! to what source may

we trace it? To none other than the weeping of a little girl. A Welsh clergyman asked her for the text of a sermon he had just preached. The child made no answer—she could but weep. He ascertained that she had no Bible in which to look for the text. This led him to inquire whether her parents or neighbors had a Bible, which in turn led to that meeting in London, in 1804, to devise means for supplying the poor in Wales with the Bible, the grand issue of which was the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society. “A child may set a stone rolling which the mightiest man cannot stop.” Tears are small things, but in the tears of how many broken hearts might we not see great significance? How many gems have been passed by because in their stains they looked like stones? Ah, friends, smallness and soils should not be made to argue insignificance; nor, as we will notice farther on, should brightness and polish be made to argue innocence. Conceive, if you can, anything more soiled and uninviting to the gay

throng of to-day than a group of "waifs" from the byways of some great city; yet such a group suggested to the mind of Robert Raikes an idea which developed into the organization of a Sabbath-school. Estimate its benefits, ye who can, and then dare to despise the day of "small things."

Even as this, a thought indulged, a word uttered, an action performed, by you, dear reader, may contain the germ of a life that will be a benediction to those who come beneath its influence. In one of Britain's naval engagements, the deck of a man-of-war was swept by a tremendous broadside from the enemy. The captain ordered another company to be "piped up" from below to take the place of the dead. This company on reaching the deck were panic stricken at the sight of the mangled remains of their comrades. The captain, on seeing this swore a horrid oath, wishing them all in hell. A pious old marine stepped up to him, and very respectfully touching his hat, said: "Cap-

tain, I believe God hears prayer, and if He had heard your prayer just now, what would have become of us?" Having spoken thus, he made a respectful bow and retired to his place. These words fastened themselves in the captain's mind, he considered the claims of religion, became converted, and afterwards became a preacher and lived in Edinburgh as pastor of one of its churches. Through him his brother, Robert Haldane, embraced Christianity and subsequently settled in Geneva, where he was divinely directed and made instrumental for good by securing interviews with the students of the theological school, which led to the conversion of a number of them, among whom was J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, who blessed Germany by his presidency over the theological seminary at Geneva, and who lives throughout Protestantism to-day in his immortal "History of the Reformation." Such are the fruits of the timely and well-spoken words of the pious old marine—the work of a moment.

"Kind words can never die."

No more can evil words. The words may be forgotten, but their influence will live, poisoning the minds of thousands. We think it was Lyman Beecher who said, "Speak me a word, and that word will go ringing down through the ages."

Such is the influence, not only of life, but of the smallest acts of life. We cannot measure a word or an act by first influences. We may even be unable to determine the *character* of either—the influence being small and apparently harmless—just as many would hesitate in determining the difference between some kinds of seed. There is a resemblance between wild mustard seed and that of the turnip, but the one is no less mustard because it looks like turnip. The difference between a sour apple seed and that of a sweet is not perceptible, but put them in the ground, and while the one is producing sweet apples, the other will as surely bring forth *sour* fruit as that "like begets like." So the character of many an act has to be determined,

not by first appearances, but by its fruit. Is it therefore unimportant? No more than it is unimportant whether you sow wild mustard or turnip seed in your field. He is a wise man who sows only that kind of seed about whose purity there can be no doubt. Let your question be, not, What *harm* is there in it? Rather let it be, What *good* is there in it? Plenty of the bad fruit in the gardens of social, political, and religious life to-day is the product of small seeds. Perhaps, as in the natural garden, we are unable to tell who dropped the seed, but the fruit is evidence of a planter, and the kind of fruit now determines what men may have disputed about at first, viz., the kind of seed.

Thus the character of every act may be determined, but oh! the influence, who can measure it? "The stone, flung from my careless hand into the lake, splashed down into the depths; and that was all. No, it was not all. Look at those concentric rings, rolling their tiny ripples among the sedgy reeds, dipping the overhanging

boughs of yonder willow, and producing an influence, slight but conscious, to the very shore itself. That hasty word, that word of pride or scorn, flung from my lips in casual company, produces a momentary depression ; and that is all. No, it is not all. It deepened that man's disgust at godliness, and sharpened that man's sarcasm ; and it shamed that half-converted one out of his penitent misgivings ; and it produced an influence, slight but *eternal*, on the destiny of an immortal life. Oh ! it is a terrible power that I have—this power of influence ; and it clings to me. I cannot shake it off. It is born with me, it has grown with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. It speaks, it walks, it moves ; it is powerful in every look of my eye, in every word of my lips, in every act of my life. I cannot live to myself. I must either be a light to illumine, or a tempest to destroy. I must either be an Abel, who by his immortal righteousness, being dead, yet speaketh ; or an Achan, the saddest continuance of

whose otherwise forgotten name is the fact that man perishes not alone in his iniquity. O brethren! this necessary element of power belongs to you all. Your sphere may be contracted, your influence may be small; but a sphere and influence you have."—W. M. PUNSHON.

"We are all authors," said J. B. Gough in one of his lectures. "Every morning a clean white page is placed before us. Night finds it written full, and death will not erase it." That influence will live in some way to bless or curse succeeding generations.

It is said of the human voice that, although its sound dies away, the pulsations of atmosphere which it caused go on for ever, rolling out through the infinitude of space, bearing the impress of good or evil that issued from the heart of man. "The air is one vast library on whose pages are forever written all that man has ever said, or woman whispered." What an inspiration to choose right thoughts and words!

In like manner does our character live among

men. That which a man *is*, "photographs" itself on other spirits, and is thus perpetuated to all time. The beliefs, purposes, affections, tastes and habits of the parent are reproduced in the child, and again in children's children, who, as well as he, leave an impress for good or evil in the crowded street, in the place of business, and in the various circles of life in which they may have moved. Thus, in a very few years, that influence which we thought did not amount to much, has in "effect" trodden the threshold of countless minds, assumed different phases through associative influences, and entered into the composition of other characters, bearing with it an impress for good or evil, according as its mission was in the outset. Well might Tom Paine, in the agonies of remorse, say, "I would give worlds, if I had them, that 'The Age of Reason' had never been published." But Tom Paine lives to-day. Extracts of his writings are affixed to the walls of Calcutta, blighting the minds of the heathen. His influence has gone

out through all the earth; and in a thousand different forms, but with the same tarnish, will be handed down to succeeding generations.

Could we but die when these bodies are laid away in the tomb, the same importance could not be attached to our influence; yet would it be so expansive as to demand the deepest consideration. But the fact of our living in the character of others for ever! How it should stimulate us to build the most perfect character! How critically should we examine every timber used in the construction! Some one has said, "Actions, looks, words, steps, form the alphabet by which you may spell character." Thousands are continually saying, "What harm is there in this? What harm is there in that?" They fail to know that their character is formed as the icicle—drop by drop. That which you do and say each moment enters into the composition of your character; and its impress is indelible. The drunkard in the cell loathes the day when he smoked his first cigar, or sipped

the wine glass, "That stain polluted my character," he moans. Yon man on the gallows wishes that he had said "No," when asked to take that pleasure drive on Sabbath afternoon.

The picking up of a pin not only strengthens habits of economy, but indicates character to others, and secures a situation for the "waif" in some store. Take heed to the pennies, and the dollars will look out for themselves. A perfect character is only attained by a scrupulous regard unto the "little" things that go to make up character, and a perfect character we must build before we can wield a spotless influence. A teacher sent a little boy to the head of his class for spelling a word correctly, and then wrote the word on the board that the rest might see. "O," said the little fellow, "I didn't say it so, Miss W.; I said 'e' instead of 'i'." Had he neglected to correct the mistake, principles of dishonesty might have grown in him, and some firm, joint stock company, or government, been disgraced by him. By building up a good char-

acter he preserved a good influence. We cannot exert the best influence unless we are "faithful in that which is least." John the Baptist was beheaded through the bewitching appearance of that young lady who thought it was no harm to spend an hour in frivolity. On the other hand, an institution known as the Madero Institute, in Saltillo, Mexico, was given to the Church by Governor Madero, because of a young lady whose Christian principles led her respectfully to decline an invitation to dance with the Governor. It makes all the difference in the world whether we say "Yes" or "No," when the sunny hand of all the world is held out to us. The one means a poisonous influence, now and forever; the other means an influence everlasting, but benedictory.

"Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth."



CHAPTER II.

THE SUBTILTY OF SATAN.

“ But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ; . . . for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.” 2 Cor. xi. 3, 14.

THE noblest of all enterprises is the establishment of righteousness unto the ends of the earth. This is the work of God. The meanest of all things is that principle which would lay even a “straw” in the way of such an enterprise. Such is the principle that characterizes Satan, whether in his native habiliments, or as an angel of light. The fact of his appearing sometimes with innocency written on his forehead, does not lessen the meanness of the

underlying principle, but rather augments it, for he not only entices a soul, but does it by deceptive influences. Thus he allured the pair in "The Garden," and thus he has beguiled more souls, and done more to hinder the Gospel, than in any other way. By that which is at first apparently harmless, he paves the way for wilful disobedience, and lays a foundation for infidelity and general disaster.

The more pure and holy the Church, the more does he find it expedient to adopt such means. Before the "fall" he would have deemed it useless to put into the heart of Eve the thought of murdering her husband. His purposes would most surely have been defeated. But by a disguised process, he paved the way until the *seed* of the disobedient pair evinced all the horror of the satanic principle in murder itself.

The same subtilty is practised to-day. Satan knows full well that in Abraham perfect obedience was made the condition of God's

favor, and that the conditions remain unchanged, and if by any means he can allure the followers of Christ to the slightest disobedience, his cup is full, knowing that the displeasure of the Lord is incurred, and weakness wrought in the Church. The general tendency of sin being downward, he is not discouraged, if there is not a favorable opportunity to cut short the work of the Lord, and launch souls into perdition. If he cannot make atheists of us, if he cannot lead us into drunkenness, thieving, or lying, he has plenty other employment, in which if we will engage, he will not object to our maintaining the name of a Christian. Indeed, is it not by such instrumentality—these refined agencies—that the arch-fiend most effectually accomplishes his designs? A disguised foe is the most treacherous of all foes. The city of Troy was invincible while her foe maintained the attitude of a foe, but when the enemy assumed the appearance of a friend, then was the king of Troy deceived and his city over-

thrown. That beautiful horse! Who would have suspected that any harm could come of him? But alas, alas! the city is fallen; not by mighty engines of war from without the gates, but by the smiles and kisses of false friendship.

Such are Satan's tactics in his endeavors to overthrow the work of God. True, he has brought forward his strong agencies of atheism, infidelity, etc., and brought them to bear on the Church, and a great struggle is at hand; but it is not by these, unaided, that he hopes to effect his purposes. How, like a shrewd general, he uses these as a decoy and slyly proceeds to adopt some other method whereby he may accomplish his designs. Even as the enemies of Troy, he assumes the aspect of a friend, and with all the subtilty so peculiar to him, proceeds with his work of death. He tells the Church to beware of scepticism, drunkenness, gambling, etc., but by his artifices he has given a shade of innocency to certain literature that is more entertaining than profitable, to social wine-sipping,

the parlor dance, the circus, theatre-going, family cards, Sabbath visiting, fashions, etc., that seems so plausible to multitudes of Christians that they eagerly accept these things. Be not deceived. This is the Trojan horse. Beautiful, indeed, but death is in his bowels. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity against God."

God wills that we should have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. When He sent King Saul against the Amalekites, He commanded that everything should be put to the sword. Saul executed the command as far as the men and women were concerned, all that was vile and refuse he did utterly destroy. But those fat oxen, sheep, and lambs ! What harm could come of these ? Surely, now the warriors were dead, Israel would suffer no hurt ; and these fatlings, what purpose might they not serve ? So Saul preserved Agag alive, and Israel took unto themselves the finest of the herds and flocks. This was the work of the

devil, and by it he rent the kingdom of Israel from Saul that day. How cunning are his devices. To disclose his true mission, would be to defeat his purposes. He denounces gross evils, makes fair promises, and succeeds in imposing upon the people forbidden fruit, with a pretence that good will come in wisdom and happiness. We do not like to predict the future of the thousands who are thus deluded, but "the wages of sin is death."

Multitudes in the Church to-day who would spurn the bar-room, brothel, gambling-den, etc., as they would a deadly serpent, have not so learned to flee the least approach of evil. They fail to be impressed with the magnitude of what are sometimes styled "little" sins, and to observe how effectually they serve the satanic purpose, which is to bring us into disfavor with God, and make feeble our endeavor to establish righteousness in the earth. No sin is small in the eyes of God. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty

of all." One offence is sufficient to incur the Divine displeasure. One offence engenders a spirit of weakness, which becomes a burden and hindrance, in Church enterprise, greater, we have said, than that from without. God could deliver the formidable Jerichoites into the hand of Israel when her garments were spotless, but when Achan took of the spoils of Jericho, appropriating to self-gratification that which should have been devoted to the Lord, then Israel's victories were overshadowed by a defeat, the men of Ai pursuing them with fatal effect, not because Ai was able to fight against the Lord, but because Achan's sin had brought weakness into the camp of Israel.

Are there not Achans in the camp of Israel to-day? How many have taken of the fat of the land and hidden it away for selfish purposes? Who can estimate the weakness these are bringing, not only upon themselves, but upon our beloved Zion? Is there not truth in the words of Mr. Moody: "The

wounds that Christ received in the house of His friends do more harm than all the infidels in the world?" One person inside a citadel may accomplish what an army from without would be powerless to effect. The waves of the sea give slight terror to the ship of sound timbers. Is infidelity becoming a terror to us? It need not, if we have no Achans in our midst. When Achan is dead, then will scepticism diminish, for is it not by his inconsistency that many are made to doubt that the Gospel is a satisfying portion and the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth? We think so. Exterminate Achan and Agag, and nothing can hinder our conquest.

Intemperance has been lifted up against us, and a most powerful foe it has been; yet, but for the strategies of Satan it had been rendered less deadly. He beheld that it was the business of the Church to "grope her way into the alleys, and courts, and purlieus of the city, up the broken staircase, into the bare room

beside the loathesome sufferer, and down into the dark, damp cellar," in quest of the perishing ; he knew that if Christ who was lifted up on the cross, should be lifted up in every Christian heart, He would draw these suffering bonded ones unto Himself, as surely as in the days of His flesh ; and to make drunkenness a success, Satan, deceiver that he is, contrived to get Agag into the Church, everybody knows with what result. "Thomas" has not found time to go to prayer-meeting, and the consequence is, he has more than once been *tempted to disbelieve in a risen Saviour*. "Martha" has been "careful and troubled about many things," to the neglect of her spiritual interests and the good of others.

Such are Satan's devices to oppose the kingdom of our Lord. Secret foes, how much to be dreaded are they ! An old fable tells of a diminutive fish that clings by myriads to the vessel's keel and arrests its progress. Some of these we have to consider in the following

chapters, in a spiritual sense, as hindering the ship Zion. It is said that in the Strait of Sunda there is an under-current which is very deceiving; ships in full sail, apparently making good headway, are in reality, making little progress. That's Agag; that's Achan; that is the Trojan horse, in the Church. We have little to fear from a stalking Goliah, in the person of an Ingersoll. As God delivered the Midianites into the hand of Gideon with his reduced force, so will He deliver the world into the hands of the Church, speedily, or less speedily, according as she cleanses her hands from the "accursed thing."

Jericho is fallen. The Church is advancing. The total Protestant missionary work of the world is reported to have 2,755 ordained missionaries, 2,162 women, 2,343 ordained native preachers, 26,356 other native helpers, and 644,794 communicants of churches. Satan is trembling for Ai and the other cities. Beware of Achan.



CHAPTER III.

ADORNING, IS IT RIGHT?

“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel.

“But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.” 1 Peter iii. 3, 4.

THE question is often asked, “What harm is there in a gold chain, a fashionable bonnet, etc.?” To whom shall we look for an answer? If a little child desires to know whether it is right for it to have this or that, what would you tell it? - Would you say, “Run and ask father or mother?” Now we are likened unto “little children,” having God as our Father? Should we not observe the advice we give to the child, and seek our Father’s counsel?

“Who so wise to choose our lot,
Or to appoint our ways?”

If any there be who prefer their own will, let it be said of them as of the child who persists in plucking the flowers of the garden without asking if it may. Regarding this matter, we could not be in doubt very long if we would attach as much importance to the Divine Word as the little girl of whom we read. A mother sat reading to her three children, and coming to an incident of a boy stealing some apples, she paused to question the children as to why we ought not to steal apples or pears.

“Oh,” said William, “because they do not belong to us.”

“And what do you say, Robert?”

“I say, because if they caught us they would be sure to send us to prison.”

“And now, Mary, let's have your opinion. Why ought we not to steal apples or pears, or anything else?”

“Because,” said little Mary, looking meekly

up at her mother, "because God says we *musn't*."

How true! What "Divine" could give a better reason? Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings might we not learn wisdom? God, who said "Thou shalt not steal," said also, "Let not your adorning be with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." Now if thou commit no theft, yet if thou art guilty of outward adorning (as above specified), thou art become a transgressor, and must be convinced by the law of sin, for "sin is the transgression of the law."

To Methodists particularly there are three "*musn'ts*" over which it is a marvel that they can stumble. Plainer words could not be uttered than those of Wesley, whose doctrines are the basis of our theology to-day. In his sermon on "Dress," after observing that slovenliness can be no part of religion, and that "cleanliness is indeed next to godliness," and neatness to be commended as a Christian duty, he goes on

to show how the wearing of gold, pearls, or costly apparel engenders pride, increases vanity, begets anger, inflames lust, and is in opposition to the adorning of good works, and suppresses, slowly, perhaps, yet surely, the inward work of the Spirit; (he magnifies the evil of improper dress, food, and sleep, in that they do most certainly affect our moral nature and hinder the kingdom of God). The only countenance he shows as to splendid apparel is in the case of those in supreme authority. "Behold, those that wear gorgeous apparel are in king's courts." Luke vii. 25. For the benefit of earnest hearts we cannot do better than to give John Wesley's character of a Christian, as taken from Tyerman's "Life of Wesley."

"The distinguishing marks of a Christian are not his opinions, though the Christians are fundamentally distinguished from Jews, Turks and infidels; from Papists, and from Socinians, and Arians; neither are the marks of a Christian words or phrases; nor actions, custom or usage

of an indifferent nature; nor the laying of the whole stress of religion on any single part of it. A Christian is one who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him; one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, and with all his strength. He rejoices evermore, prays without ceasing, and in everything gives thanks. His heart is full of love to all mankind, and is purified from envy, malice, wrath, and every malign and unkind affection. His one desire, and the one design of his life is, not to do his own will but the will of Him who sent him. He keeps not only some, or most of God's commandments, but all, from the least to the greatest. He follows not the customs of the world; for vice does not lose its nature by becoming fashionable. He fares not sumptuously every day. He cannot lay up treasures on earth any more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot adorn himself on any pretence with gold or costly

apparel. He cannot join in any diversion that has the least tendency to vice. He cannot speak evil of his neighbor no more than he can tell a lie. He cannot utter unkind or idle words. No corrupt communication comes out of his mouth. He does good unto all men ; unto neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies." Thus as to dress, as well as to many other practices, the founder of Methodism says very emphatically, we " mustn't."

Again, the " General Rules " of our Church, to-day, to which all Methodists have subscribed, are no less emphatic. Among the things to be avoided as an evidence of our desire for salvation, we read : " Doing what we know is not for the glory of God ; as the putting on of gold or costly apparel." Of these " General Rules " it is written : " And all these we know His Spirit writes upon truly awakened hearts." Are not many of us relapsed into slumber ? In the section on " dress," it is plainly stated that the spirit of the New Testament is manifestly

against the use of costly or gaudy apparel and the wearing of needless ornaments. The repeated violation of this or any other rule is made sufficient to expel the offender. By the law, then, have not multitudes long since ceased to be Methodists ? The law not being executed, they yet have a *name* among us. But while some have despised reproof, others, perhaps, have been more innocently led ; we would, therefore, be cautious about condemning their Christian principles. Perhaps we as ministers have failed to admonish the dear people as we ought. God help us. As to putting on these adornments, the Discipline loudly proclaims *we "mustn't."*

But the prohibition that applies to *all* Christians—who can disregard it ? *God* says we "mustn't." Among directions given to holy women we read in 1 Peter iii. 3-5, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel. But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corrup-

tible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." In the following verse we find that such was the adorning of godly women of old : " After this manner, in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves." To those who had gone after the giddy fashions, God addresses himself in strong terms of condemnation. Isa. iii. 16-26. Because of their stretched forth necks, their mincing, their chains, bracelets, head-bands, earrings, rings, nose jewels, crissing pins and changeable suits of apparel, with their attendant evils, the judgment of the Lord fell heavily upon them. Lamentations, chap. 1. God countenances nought but modest apparel : " I will that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array. But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. And let no *man* think that he is exempt from these commands,

because women only are addressed. Read Gen. xxxv. 1-4, how that Jacob and all his household put aside their ornaments ; also, Ex. xxxiii. 4-6, where Moses and all the people, to free themselves from the wrath of the Lord, who had charged them with being stiff-necked, stripped themselves of their ornaments. God says we "*mustn't.*"

God's will should be a sufficient ground for obedience ; no dutiful child should ask, why ? before obeying. Reasons, however, are not wanting. In the first place, these things are needless. Ribbons, lace, fringes, embroidery, etc., are not essential to warmth or covering ; and gold chains, rings and diamonds are not essential to true loveliness. Would Florence Nightingale or Grace Darling need to adorn themselves with jewellery to be admired ? Their good works far outshine the glittering diamond. Who would not rejoice to take them by the hand ? But you say, "Has not God beautified all nature in a thousand different ways ?" He

has. And no less beautiful has he made man. Who will insinuate that we need to improve upon God's handiwork? Would He make the noblest of His creation less worthy of admiration than the rose-bush? He who has so thought, has looked through misty glasses at this glorious "Temple of the soul," built by the "Master Workman."

"Not in the world of light alone,
Where God has built His blazing throne,
Nor yet alone on earth below,
With belted seas that come and go,
And endless isles of sunlit green,
Is all thy Maker's glory seen—
Look in upon thy wondrous frame,
Eternal wisdom still the same!"

What architecture is more wonderfully sublime? And the moral grandeur of the immortal within, how shall we express it? Created in the Divine likeness, what needed it of any further adornment? Has it become tarnished by sin? But God so restores it to His image as to make it without "spot or wrinkle, or any

such thing." Eph. v. 27. Yea, are we not become "jewels" for Christ's kingdom? Mal. iii. 17. And, is He not to us "the pearl of great price?" What need we of the jewels of the world? Let him that would be adorned, polish up the bright gem of the intellect, "covet earnestly the best gifts," and be possessed of a soul that glows with "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Another reason why we are to refrain from "costly apparel," is, that conformity to the world may be avoided. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Rom. xii. 1, 2. The world, being earthly, seeketh and professeth to find its glory in the earth; but we,

being heavenly, profess to glory in those things which are from above. We say there is supreme honor and glory in being a child of God. Who will believe us if we continue to glory in the ways of this world? If a man tells me that the rose is his favorite flower, I expect to see roses in the foreground of his garden. So when a soul testifies that this world is vanity, and exclaims

"Christ has become
My joy and my song,"

we expect to see that soul glorying no more in that in which it once gloried, but in the ornament which adorned Christ, even that of a "meek and quiet spirit." Conformity to the world denies that there is a satisfaction in Christ. Mr. Finney says, "What does that gaudy ribbon and those ornaments upon your dress say to every one that meets you? It makes the impression that you wish to be thought pretty. Take care! You might just as well write on your clothes: '*No truth in*

religion.' They say, 'Give me dress; give me fashion; give me flattery, and I am happy.' The world understands this testimony as you walk the streets. You are living 'epistles known and read of all men.' Only let Christians act consistently, and heaven will rejoice, and hell groan at their influence. But, O, let them fill their ears with ornaments, and their fingers with rings—let them put feathers in their hats, clasps upon their arms, and heaven puts on the robes of mourning, and hell may hold a jubilee." That these things are worn to secure popularity, to gratify the vanity of an unsubstantial, genteel world, and that men's hearts are set upon them, is manifest in their reluctance to part with them, and in their carefulness not to forget them when going into society. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John ii. 15.

What does this argue? Plainly that multitudes of these fashionable Church members are wholly destitute of "spiritual life," without

which a Church (so called) is not a Church, but merely an organization. Is it a small matter that so many of these are received to our fellowship? "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Eph. v. ii. Such an increase of membership is not a glory, but a shame, not strength but weakness. We speak lovingly, with much forbearance towards those who are confused by the example of others who profess much, yet must we speak plainly, and are emboldened by the word of God, and by the voice of consecrated men of wisdom. Mr. Moody, when at Toronto, said: "We used to have to preach to the Church to keep out of the world; now the world has gone into the Church—moved right in and taken possession, and that is the reason we have so little power." Said he: "I do not fear the work of infidels half so much as miserable false professors."

Spurgeon recently said: "We may live to see men calling themselves Christians and differing

in no single item from Mohammedans ; in fact, even now there are religionists among us who are not so near the truth as the followers of the False Prophet. Oak has given place to willow ; everybody has grown limp. Out of the generality of limpness, has come an admiration of it. A man cannot speak a plain word without being accused of bitterness, and if he denounces an error he is narrow-minded ; for all must join the universal admiration society, or be placed under ban, and be howled down." Heaven bless our Zion. Under God what hath she not wrought ? But is there not this one stain upon her garments ? Yet will we not forsake her. There are spots on the sun, but shall we despise him ? Nor will we despise the Church, but pray God to help us.

Great advances have been made during the past century ; but this is not the point in question. What might have been done, had Christ been preached by every life—in the shop, in the street, in the market, and in the parlor

with the guests, as well as in the prayer-meeting? Wesley counted the evil in question a great clog, and labored with tears to suppress it. His people, particularly, seemed raised up to spread scriptural holiness. What other denomination teaches that we can be wholly sanctified in this life? Well may Wesley have been concerned that our example should bear testimony in harmony with our precept, and that from us a salutary influence as to these things might go out through Christendom. But how far has it been so? What difference in a Methodist congregation, from that of any other, as to dress?

In a sermon before the Methodist Conference at London, 1881, Dr. Carman, in speaking of the exceptions taken to the central doctrine of Methodism, and of the taunts concerning Methodist peculiarities, said: "And these taunts are affecting Methodist people and disposing them to conformity to the world, and to dead and dying Christian Churches. We dare not afford this conformity. 'You Methodists cannot dance.' Of

course you cannot. Is that any reproach ? Did the Saviour and the holy apostles spend much time in dancing ? Did Luther, or Wesley, or Whitefield, or Fletcher, or Watson, or Wilbur Fisk, or Bangs, or Hedding, spend much time in such frivolities ? ‘ You Methodists cannot play cards.’ Of course we cannot. Is that a reproach ? We cannot attend horse-racing, or be abettors of boat-racing, and a hundred and one popular amusements that might be mentioned. Of course we cannot. Is that a weakness, a reproach ? ‘ You Methodists cannot dress like the people of the world.’ Of course we ought not, but alas, alas, that reproach has well nigh passed away.” Is it not so ?

No one will say we have gained by this conformity. What have we lost ? Who dare estimate ? Concerning the churches as a whole, Finney puts the lowest estimate very high. But God has said, “ My word shall not return unto Me void,” and we would not like to say it is lost, but oh ! how much is it hindered ? Christians

are bound to warn sinners of their awful condition, to exhort them to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on eternal life. But how will the world receive the exhortation of those who are as eager for the fashions and fineries of the world as the world itself? Is it not this that closes the mouths of Christians? They are ashamed to speak to their neighbors, lest they be met with the question: "What difference is there between thee and me?" O for a severing from this conformity! Let every soul be lit up with a divine illumination; then will there be a glow upon the cheek, a sparkle in the eye, and the very hand be charged with the Divine presence; then will the sinner see, and feel, and know.

Yet another reason why we should be modestly appavelled, is that we may be less a stumbling-block to the poor. With some it seems to be a wonder why the poor lounge about home, walk the fields, or do anything in preference to going to church. It should be no wonder at all.

It was not so in Christ's time,—but the very reverse. While many of the rich had no delight in our Lord, we read, “the common people heard Him gladly.” Mark xii. 37. Why? Because He was of lowly mien, and made every sacrifice to reach them. In humility of spirit He entered their dwellings, spoke kind words, comforted and healed their sick. For the very same reason the professedly refined scorned Him, “This man eateth with publicans and sinners.” Was it not so in Wesley's time? He preached a Gospel that drew the masses; the common people heard it gladly, and the dignified church closed its doors with scorn. The same is true to-day, as is proved by the Salvation Army, who, though they may have some objectionable features, yet, nevertheless, have demonstrated clearly that the poor have not lost a relish for the Gospel. What is it, then, do we not preach the Gospel? Yes, we preach the Gospel, a Gospel of humility; but, by our devotion to the goddess of fashion, we deny what we preach. This is the shrine at

which the world worships, and the poor know very well that they are welcome only at a distance. We will not deny that there are some noble hearts under gold chains, before whom certain advocates for plainness of dress might well hide their faces. We read of a lady robed in silks, who, in the streets of a great city, ordered her coachman to stop, and, alighting from her elegant carriage, led a shivering waif into a shop, called for water, food, and shoes, and administered such kindness as led the homeless wanderer to look into her face and ask, "Ma'am, are you God's wife?" But neither does this justify the practice in question, for while we may be kind in heart, yet to those to whom we cannot speak, our dress speaketh from the distance, repelling the poor and encouraging the vain. Moreover, God forbids us, for many reasons, one of which we have yet to emphasize farther on.

The general tendency of this conformity is, evidently, to drive the poor from us, and give us less inclination to call them back.

The Rev. Mr. Rainsford, in discussing the cause of immorality among the working girls of New York city, said that there was certainly not a cordial welcome for this class in the churches ; that while the motto of the ancient Church was, "Come ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," the modern Church says, "Come ye that labor and are heavy laden, and able to pay pew rents, and get rest for your souls." Regarding this matter, Principal Austin, of St. Thomas, in his work, "The Gospel to the Poor," while he treats principally of the pew-rent system, yet says, that the impression so prevalent among the poor, that the Church is for "monied men," is due to various causes. "The style of dress common in church, the natural timidity of poor people, and, above all, the great tendency everywhere apparent in society, to form into circles and coteries, as well as the pew system, are responsible for the widespread and exceedingly hurtful impression on the minds of the poor."

Without question, the 50,000 people of Edinburgh, the 1,000,000 of London, and the multiplied thousands of New York and other cities, that never go to church, might have been much lessened if a warmer welcome had been found in the churches. By personal visitation we have ascertained that, even in humbler portions of our work, many destitute families are kept from church through want of a welcome that would make them feel that their poverty is not despised ; homes that have rejoiced to have some one offer prayer, while now and then a father or mother, brother or sister, unsaved, would weep under the story of salvation. How gladly would many of these persons sit in our churches, if, as Mr. Moody said in Toronto, we would not "make the poor man sit behind, and the rich man in front."

It is a good thing to carry food and clothing to the distressed poor, and teach them, as many are being taught at present, habits of industry ; it is a grand thing to remove their temptations

by the arm of legislation, but if we would liberate them from the source of all moral depravity, let us take them up as the Salvation Army and others are doing now in London, right into our own arms, even into the bosom of the Church.

An old-fashioned lady of small stature, tottered up the aisle of a grand church and took a seat near the front, that she might hear the renowned Dr. — that was to preach that day. Some ladies in the pew beckoned to the sexton, and he kindly (?) gave the stranger a seat toward the rear. A tear moistened her eye, but she obeyed. The great preacher came upon the stand, his hand was on the Bible, but, with a glance over the audience, he paused, beckoned to the sexton, and in another moment room was made for the old lady in the front pew of all ; she was the preacher's mother.

Thousands of fashionable Christians to-day, if the mother of Christ our Bishop should come to their pew, worn and dusty, would beckon to the sexton. Yea, this have they done already.

Christ says: "Whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother." Is it any wonder that there is spiritual stagnation in so many of our churches, and abounding drunkenness and debauchery on every street corner, when so many of the brothers, and sisters, and mothers of Christ are escorted to the rear of His tabernacle? The halls of vice give a better welcome, hence they are filled. Before the universal triumph of the Gospel there will have to be a revolution in these things. The Gospel that is converting cannibalism will convert our drunkards and prostitutes when the principles taught by St. James are observed. Gold rings and goodly apparel are no recommendation to Christ, and many need not be surprised if, in that great day, the great preacher makes room for his despised ones, and the children of the kingdom are cast out. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

When, in connection with this, we consider the waste of God's money incurred by such a course, further reason cannot be desired why it is sinful. The waste of the liquor traffic is too awful to contemplate. But this is made by those who profess no better. What shall we say of the Church, who professes uprightness, to whom God has entrusted funds for the extension of His kingdom, when she is guilty of squandering multiplied millions. The total contribution of all the churches of America, for all church interests do not exceed \$77,000,000 per year. On the other hand, for ladies' foreign dress goods, alone, is expended annually \$125,000,000. Dr. Talmage says: "The items of dress among Christian people on the Sabbath day is an outrage on the Christian religion. Hundreds of 'broken and contrite (?) hearts,' covered up in rainbows and spangles, followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene, all a jingle and a flash! Enough money is expended by the Christians of a large city, in excess of the required outlay, for

dress, to relieve all the poverty, and educate all the ignorance, and baulk all the crime."

In the following manner, if not to the same excess, do hundreds of our dear people misappropriate the Lord's money. "A woman, professing to love Christ more than the world," said a minister of New York, "have I seen clad in a silk dress costing seventy-five dollars : making up and trimming of the same, forty dollars ; bonnet (or apology for one), thirty-five dollars ; velvet mantle, one hundred dollars ; watch, chain, pin, and other trappings, four hundred and fifty dollars ; total, one thousand two hundred and fifty dollars—all hung upon a frail, dying woman. I have seen her at a meeting on behalf of homeless wanderers in New York, wipe her eyes upon an expensive embroidered handkerchief at the story of their sufferings, and, when the contribution box came round, take from a well-filled port-monnaie, of costly workmanship, twenty-five cents to aid the society formed to promote their welfare. Ah ! thought I, dollars

for ribbons, and pennies for Christ." Some Christians lay all upon the altar but their purse. These as surely profess a lie as did Ananias and Sapphira. Of them Wesley says, "Ye are the ones who continually grieve the Holy Spirit of God, and in a great measure stop His gracious influence from descending on our assemblies.

"Many of your brethren beloved of God have not food to eat; they have not raiment to put on; they have not a place where to lay their head. And why are they thus distressed? Because you impiously, unjustly, and cruelly detain from them what your Master and theirs lodges in your hands, on purpose to supply their wants! See that poor member of Christ, pinched with hunger, shivering with cold, half naked! Meantime you have plenty of this world's goods—meat, drink, and apparel. In the name of God, what are you doing? Do you neither fear God nor regard man? Why do you not deal out your bread to the hungry, and cover the naked with a garment? Have you laid out in your

own costly apparel what would have answered both these intentions? This idle expense has no approbation, either from God or your own conscience." To those who say, "We can afford it," he replies, "Be ashamed to take such miserable nonsense into your mouths; such stupid cant; and palpable absurdity! Can any steward afford to be an arrant knave? To waste his lord's goods?"

Moreover, ye who are the "light of the world," ye who are as a city that is set upon a hill, and cannot be hid, by your example do encourage the extravagance of fashion everywhere, and publish to all the world that it is no harm to squander the Lord's money. What a reproach will meet us at the judgment! It is said, upon good authority, that many ladies in New York city—other cities worship at the same shrine—can display \$25,000 worth of jewelry, and that at least forty can boast of \$50,000 worth, while not less than ten, like Mrs. Vanderbilt, and Mrs. Gould, possess the enormous value of \$200,000,

in diamonds, sapphires, rubies and emeralds. At the opera opening of the Metropolitan, a well-known Broadway dealer in diamonds estimated that at least \$1,000,000 worth of diamonds was worn by the audience. Society abounds with earrings from \$600 to \$4,000 a pair, hair ornaments worth \$6,000, bracelets from one to six pairs for a single person, with pins, chains, etc. Will not these persons, with thousands elsewhere, of different and less costly array, have it to say in the judgment, "The Church hung out a license for adornment?"

Out of this pride and vanity—as is so generally the case with any sin—has there not come also another evil rendering the Church still more unable to go forward to the conquest of the world? What would you think of a man who in settling on a bush farm, would first erect a \$3,000 mansion, a large barn with underground stables, etc., and then toil away in the bush with a great debt on his shoulders? What would have been said of the English army, if, when

marching to relieve General Gordon, they had consumed time, and the nation's wealth, by rearing great castles along their route? This is what pride and vanity have done for the Church. Yonder are millions shut up in the desert. In our march to relieve them, have we not loitered to build castles, and lay out parks? In his introduction to Principal Austin's work, "The Gospel to the Poor," Dr. Carman says, "The simplicity of the Gospel in its militant and aggressive state ill comports with expensive buildings, sumptuous appointments, and large emoluments." At this juncture, in view of the auction system, and other evils in connection with pew-renting, and the various other schemes, as church fairs, lotteries, bazaars, tea-meetings, election cakes, etc., which have been adopted to alleviate our indebtedness, the question has been asked, and justly too, "Where are we drifting?" "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

Do away with this costly array; let this vain ambition to be like the world cease, and, "hav-

ing food and raiment, let us be therewith content ;” then, with consecrated lives, need we no more be put to confusion as to Gospel support and extension, for He that hath said, “Go” will verily provide that which is necessary. Until we do this, the time when wars, rebellions, and contentions—that have brought sorrow upon us—shall cease, will be less speedily hastened. When will we learn that the Gospel is the only remedy for these evils, and forsaking all else, labor with all diligence and frugality to spread it unto the ends of the earth ?

Who can measure the power of woman’s influence to stem this evil ? Regarding the evil of intemperance as to “Drink,” J. G. Holland wrote in Mrs. Hayes’ album these words : “Women, only, can make wine drinking unfashionable and heal the nation of this curse.” Mrs. Hayes, when she became mistress of the White House, Washington, resolved to stand upon right principles though all the world should frown. To preserve the social atmosphere of

her entertainments, and lift the standard of Temperance, she banished wine from her tables—a thing unheard of in high fashionable life. “Secretary Evarts made a fuss. British, French, Russian, and German diplomatists lifted their eyebrows, and shrugged their shoulders,” but sterling principles are not to be swerved, and that noble lady won the day, and, amidst cheers, was the atmosphere of fashionable life blessed by the absence of the wine cup. Such a stand taken by the sisters of the Church regarding the principles we have mentioned—principles of Methodism—principles of the Bible—principles of Christ—would work a revolution in the Christian world, that would bring millions into the treasury of the Lord.

Victor Hugo, the “pride of France,” left \$10,000 to the poor of his city, and ordered that his body be carried to its resting-place in the poor man’s hearse. Wesley lived on £30 a year, and gave to the poor and the Gospel, during his life, \$150,000, leaving only enough to pay his burial

expenses; he requested that his remains be borne to the grave by six poor men, and that no pomp or extravagance be indulged in. Lady Huntingdon gave to God half a million dollars, and at the close of a life of sacrifice for her fellow-creatures, exclaimed: "My work is done; I have nothing to do but to go to my Father." The "widow" of the Bible gave her mite and was commended of God. Christ gave His life. What have you given, dear reader? Some have given of their abundance, but have never made any *sacrifice* for the Lord; they have never given the widow's mite. "I love Christ more than this," said a Karen woman as she took off a handsome necklace and laid it aside before her baptism. A Christian lady, on listening to the claims of the heathen, took off her ornaments and placed them in the treasury of the Missionary Society. This had its influence on the hearts of others. Some Christians say. "My influence is of no account; people won't listen to what *I* say." Brother, sister, say not so; even

the cast-iron Indian with a bunch of cigars in his hand, at the shop door, has an influence. Your walk, your speech, your dress, has an influence. One sister in each community throughout our land, in the practice of cheerful self-denial for Christ, might work great things for the Gospel. The droppings from the loosely-closed faucets of the water-pipes in Montreal, during the cold weather of last winter, was estimated at \$550 worth per day. "Here a little, and there a little," amounts to a great deal in the aggregate. Reader, cast in your influence. How soon might churches be built in the back lanes of the city, and on the hills of heathendom, if we were more faithful in that which is least. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." "Freely ye have received ; freely give."



CHAPTER IV.

TOBACCO.

“Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” 2 Cor. vii. 1.

“Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.” Isa. iii. 11.

FOR whatever use the weed may have been intended, it is certainly an unbecoming associate of holiness. The one is sweet, attractive and ennobling; the other, foul, repulsive and degrading. That which makes even the bar-room filthy cannot be conceived of as being compatible with a high degree of moral purity, and the Christian who touches it at once soils his influence. Breaths thus tainted do not impress the penitent with the sweetness of the

Gospel; and a minister addicted to this evil has reason to blush when he administers the emblems of the purest sacrifice ever known. Sufficient evidence against tobacco is found at once in the fact that those who use it never honestly advise others to use it, but rather to shun it lest they be ensnared by its strange fascination.

The analysis of tobacco as given by different authorities varies somewhat, but all agree in pronouncing it dangerously poisonous. Nature testifies to this fact in her attempts to throw off the enemy when first introduced to the system. A "tolerance" of the poison may be finally established, the system having adjusted itself to the new condition of affairs; yet, says Dr. Steele, after the three great eliminating organs—the lungs, the skin and the kidneys—have thrown off a large quantity, much remains in the system, and a derangement of the functions of the body must ensue, in proportion to the excessive use of the weed and the state of the constitution. The prominent constituents are carbonic acid, carbonic

oxide, and ammonia gases, carbon or soot, and nicotine. The first produces drowsiness, the second a tremor of muscles and heart, the third dryness of the mouth and throat. Nicotine is the most powerful poison, and is contained as high as six per cent., enough being in one or two good cigars to produce death, if thrown directly into the blood. A few drops of the oil of tobacco will quickly despatch a dog, and death has been known to result from the wrapping of a few leaves around the body of a person, for the purpose of smuggling them, the poison having been absorbed in perspiration. The testimony of a distinguished college of physicians is that 20,000 people die annually in the United States from the use of tobacco. Of the 70,000 lunatics in America, 15,000 were made insane through using the weed.

Cigarettes are especially injurious. Dr. Moffat attributes in a large degree the diminutive size of the Spaniards, Portuguese and Cubans to the use of the cigarette; the women and children

smoke excessively as well as the men. The cheap cigarette, so generally used among boys in our towns and cities, is manufactured from culled material and refuse cigar stumps, quids, etc., gathered from the streets and saloon floors, where they have been thrown, perhaps, from the most filthy mouths. Shocking!

For the benefit of those who may not be informed, we quote from Dr. Richardson, an acknowledged authority, a summing up of the various disturbances produced in different individuals and constitutions by smoking: "In the blood it causes undue fluidity, and change in the red corpuscles; in the stomach it gives rise to debility, nausea and vomiting; in the mucous membrane of the mouth it produces enlargement and soreness of the tonsils—smoker's sore throat—redness, dryness, and occasional peeling of the membrane, and either unnatural firmness and contraction or sponginess of the gums; and, where the pipe rests on the lips, oftentimes 'epithelial cancer'; in the heart it causes debility

of the organ, and irregular action ; in the bronchial surface of the lungs, when that is already irritable, it sustains irritation, and increases the cough ; in the organs of sense it produces dilation of the pupils of the eye, confusion of vision, bright lines, luminous or cobweb specks, and long retention of images on the retina, with analogous symptoms affecting the ear, viz., inability to define sounds clearly, and the occurrence of a sharp, ringing noise like a whistle ; in the brain it impairs the activity of the organ, oppressing it if it be nourished, but soothing it if it be exhausted ; it leads to paralysis in the motor and sympathetic nerves, and to over-secretion from the glands which the sympathetic nerves control." Another eminent physician, Dr. Shrew, enumerates eighty-seven distinct diseases produced by this fatal "luxury." A German periodical tells us that half the young men who die from twenty to twenty-five years of age are destroyed by the use of tobacco.

Probably in this, as in wine bibbing, the strong

and healthy will seem to escape entirely; because they live long, they seem to lose sight of the fact that they might have lived longer. Some of these die suddenly in the end, perhaps from heart disease, when, if an examination were made, it would be found that the affection of the heart was induced by the use of the weed. Dr. Solly, of London, tells of a man who had smoked for thirty years without any apparent injury, when, suddenly, he dropped dead, through narcotism of the heart, caused by tobacco. The man of active outdoor habits will suffer less than one of sedentary occupation, but in any case the poison will have its effect, and even though it be small, yet are we not justified in thus tampering with the candle of our life, simply for sensual gratification.

No violation of nature's laws is without its penalty, and that penalty must be paid. Do you seem to escape? Yet will the law of heredity assert itself, and innocent offspring suffer the consequence of your sin. We believe

the chewing and smoking of many young children is due to something other than a desire to be like their fellows. Depraved appetites from birth have ruined thousands in the bud. Body, intellect, and soul are laid siege to by constitutional weakness.

So closely are the body and mind related that the one suffers with the other. As to the effect of tobacco on the mind, abundance of testimony is given. A recent report of the superintendent of public schools, of Piqua, Ohio, states that in two grades of 73 boys from 12 to 15 years old, 31 habitually smoked cigarettes, and only 7 could say they had never smoked. Of 96 boys from 10 to 12, there were 68 smokers, and in the primary schools, of boys from 5 to 10, 40 per cent. smoked ; in the A. B. C. class many had begun the practice. Close observance of these and similar schools all over our land has justified the remark, that the best scholars are not tobacco users. A professor in one of our Ontario colleges said that he could tell every

smoker in his classes, by the effort it cost them to solve mental problems. In the Polytechnic school of Paris, the pupils were divided into two classes, smokers and non-smokers. The latter not only excelled in their entrance examinations, but throughout the whole course of study. So long ago as 1868, in consequence of these results, the Minister of Public Instruction forbade the use of tobacco by the pupils. In the United States, naval and military academies are lifting up their voice, and adopting the prohibition principle. Dr. Gihon, medical director of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, in his report for 1881 says: "The most important matter in the health history of the students is that relating to tobacco, and its interdiction is absolutely essential to their future health and usefulness. In this view I have been sustained by my colleagues, and all sanitarians in civil and military life whose views I have been able to obtain." Other schools and colleges are attaining unto like opinions, and the weed is being made war against

as an enemy of man's physical and intellectual interests.

Furthermore, it is found that this evil is a co-worker with alcohol. We denominate it the right hand supporter of the liquor traffic. True, some use tobacco who do not drink, yet there are few who drink that are not addicted to the use of the weed, in some form. Thousands of young people make this the starting point to a drunkard's career. The ammonia causes dryness, irritation and thirst, which calls for drink. Dr. G. Decaisne, on examining 38 boys between the ages of 9 and 15, who were smokers, found in 22 of them a strong craving for alcoholic stimulants; this ceased upon the discontinuance of their bad habit. Tobacco is without doubt the primary cause of much drunkenness. Out of 600 prisoners confined in the State Prison in Auburn, N. Y., for crimes committed when under the influence of strong drink, 500 of them testified that they began their intemperance by the use of tobacco.

Liquor dealers are not slow to perceive this, and to keep a supply of cigars to catch the barely initiated wine-bibber. The cigar does its work on one side of the bar, and the money paid for it helps to fill the cask on the other. Thus it becomes no weak supporter of King Alcohol.

Accepting these facts, as we must, one may well enquire, What honest man can continue the use of the weed? And yet in the Christian Church thousands on thousands—even ministers of the Gospel—are found smoking and chewing as though the thing were perfectly harmless. They oppose the liquor business, and at the same time encourage its recruiting officer, that is, they help God with one hand, and the devil with the other. While we denounce the imbiber, the dealer, and the legislator, ought we not to shake our garments of every influence that would in the least savor of the bar-room? If we cannot, how much to be pitied is that poor man who once stood on the bar-room floor, politely saying, "I don't drink, but will take a cigar," but who

has gone on from bad to worse until he now lies in the gutter! Think of a Christian tobacco user saying, "The drunkard could quit if he would." Man! If you cannot break off the disease in its infancy, what can you expect of him who is bound with the double chain? In trying to help these unfortunates, and to overthrow the stronghold of darkness, we need to divest ourselves of every encumbrance. It becomes the duty of every parent, every teacher of the youth, every instructor of the masses, to set himself against the spread of this evil, and use every means for its extinction.

That which is denounced by military schools and men of secular enterprise, as being opposed to national interests—an enemy of body and intellect—surely demands a greater consideration by the leader of all moral enterprises—"the Church." If the influence of the weed be deteriorating to an alarming extent in the former case, much more must it be regarded as opposed to the finer interests of the soul. The Rev.

Francis Close, D.D., late Dean of Carlisle, says: "Evidence arises every day which convinces one more and more that the prevalent use of tobacco, especially by the younger portion of the community, is destroying the physical stamina of our country, stripping youth of its bloom and beauty, and manhood of its virility, with a reflex influence on *morals* which is truly deplorable."

It is gratifying to see the open stand taken by some of our Conferences this year. The Niagara Conference of the Methodist Church spoke as follows: "This Conference desires to discountenance the use of tobacco, and urges upon all our ministers and members strongly to discourage its use in the community." The Toronto Conference said, "We deprecate in any of our members the use of tobacco, which is not only disgusting and harmful to the individual, but also presents an example which, when followed by the young, operates to their serious physical, moral, and spiritual injury. We submit for the earnest consideration of those connected with our

Church, who are engaged in the sale of tobacco, whether the time has not come when it should be discarded from their stock of merchandise." This is as it should be.

Were John Wesley living to-day, it is not improbable that he would not only retain those rules relating to drink, and those much unobserved ones concerning "dress," but also earnestly advise abstinence from tobacco as one of the conditions of membership. One thing is certain, much more can and ought to be said throughout our societies directly to this point. Mere advice won't do. It is time that the Church was purified from an influence so contrary to temperance principles, so opposite to Gospel purity. As long as Christian ministers, class leaders, Sabbath-school superintendents and teachers "smoke until the world is blue, and their theology is blue, and everything is blue," may not the world look up and say, "Thou that teachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?" In order that our preaching be most

effective, it is necessary that we preach by example as well as by precept. We know of strong men, the influence of whose teaching is rendered weak as to these points, simply because their practice does not harmonize with their precept. The candidate at the bar of Conference, the child in the Sunday-school, and the sinner in the street, loses confidence in them.

We know of some who are so conscious of this fact, that to appear more consistent they refrain from teaching at all along this line. One of our best Sabbath-school superintendents objected to the circulation of a mild temperance pledge, drawn up by the lady teachers, on these very grounds. Tobacco was mentioned; he used it, and felt that to present it under the circumstances would be as "sounding brass," etc. A little boy when advised by his smoking father, innocently replied: "If it's wrong for boys to smoke, isn't it worse for a man, father?" Surely it is. On him who stands at the helm of affairs devolves the greater responsibility. Children

look to their parents, scholars to their teachers, the Church to her ministry, and the world to the Church. Our example should be such that when we condemn any evil, we may say, "Follow thou me."

Some have spoken of this habit as a weight, carefully avoiding to call it a sin. We are persuaded that if any use it as a luxury, without being convinced of sin, it is through lack of proper investigation. How far these are accountable for not arriving at such an investigation, we will leave a higher power to judge. Some do not *wilfully* stop short of the truth. Let us suppose for a moment that to you, dear brother, it is not even a weight, as you call it; yet what about that weak brother that is stumbling over your example? "Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak." "When ye sin so against the weak brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye *sin* against Christ. 1 Cor. viii. 12. "Wherefore," saith the apostle,

“if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.” The principle laid down here is one that should run through all our Christian life. It more than meets the case in hand, for the apostle is speaking of that which to him personally was no evil, while as to tobacco, we are unanimous in admitting that it is at least a weight. Now, if the former could be construed into a sin, much more the latter. Moreover, the term weight here means sin. Reader, if you use or sell tobacco, try yourself by this principle. The whiskey-seller is a stumbling-block over which weak ones stumble into hell; the man who sells tobacco is as surely guilty. Does any one ask to what extent his influence is harmful to others? We cannot tell. Your neighbor is influenced by you, and he influences some one else in turn, and that influence will not stop at your death, but roll on down through the centuries. Judgment alone will reveal the harm done. Brother, stop and

think! "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died."

The magnitude of this evil is not arrived at until we consider its expensiveness; even then its enormity doth not fully appear. The consumption of tobacco, it is said, costs the world annually over \$1,000,000,000. Judging from some statistics, the probabilities are that the actual amount does much exceed the round numbers here given. At least one-half of this is used on this side of the Atlantic. One tobacco firm in New Orleans turns out of a particular brand 10,000 cigars daily.

Money spent in this way is given away by littles, and is scarcely missed, but in a few years an enormous sum has been expended, even a fortune. An estimate, taken from a work by Rev. Albert Sims, is as follows: "One cigar per day, at five cents, would, at 7 per cent., compound interest, amount in ten years to \$252.16, in twenty years to \$748.15, in thirty years to \$1,034." Many use much more costly cigars, and as many as five and six per day. Thus the people

are squandering hundreds of millions each year, while the whole Protestant world gives annually only \$9,000,000 to the mission cause.

The Church is not guilty of all this waste, yet she is culpable for the influence by which she licenses the waste. How many classes have we that can lift up innocent hands? The filth is at our fireside, its fumes pollute the prayer circle, its stench is in the choir, its stains are on the steps to the sacred desk. A young man being remonstrated with by his father for the use of the weed, said, "It certainly can't be wrong to use tobacco, for Bro. Blank uses it, and I don't believe he would do wrong." Bro. Blank was the presiding elder on that district. How sad!

Our cash outlay, say nothing of the influence, is sufficient to bring the blush to every cheek. Personally, we are acquainted with classes that spend from \$150 to \$200 a year; their minister is barely supported, and the cause of missions wholly neglected. Some use it still more excessively. A certain Christian merchant confessed

that his tobacco expenditure would, in forty years at compound interest, amount to \$30,000. He looked to God for help, and quit. Sammy Hick, on seeing how happy a poor woman was made by a sixpence, said to himself, "Alas! How many sixpences I have spent for tobacco!" He resolves never again to spend his money thus.

In his sermon on tobacco and opium, Dr. Talmage says: "Put into my hand all the money spent by Christian men in Brooklyn for tobacco, and I will support three orphan asylums as well and as grandly as the three great orphan asylums already established. Put into my hand the money spent by the Christians of America for tobacco, and I will clothe, shelter and feed all the suffering poor of the continent." It is a fact, that as a Church we spend at least two or three million dollars more for tobacco than for the extension of the Gospel. The lowest estimate is \$5,000,000 for tobacco; the highest for missions, \$3,000,000. Ah, yes, we are guilty. In the face of these things we ask, Is it a small matter that we give this thing place among us?



CHAPTER V.

PLEASING THE PALATE, KILLING THE BODY, AND HINDERING THE GOSPEL.

“ Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” 1 Cor. x. 31.

WHAT God is not much concerned about what we eat and drink, is an idea almost as prevalent as the practice of eating itself. But strange as it may at first seem to many, He who numbers the hairs of our head is mindful also of every morsel that goeth into our mouths. Nor should we be surprised at this, for He who made the “machine,” shall He not watch over it? What would you think of a man who would put his reaper into the field and give charge to the driver as to the number of acres he must cut, and manifest no concern when he sees that

the fellow is oiling it with coal oil ? Think not that God is less observing than man. How grieved must He be when He sees these bodies which He has so "fearfully and wonderfully made," being fed with stimulants and condiments that excite, derange and destroy. Think not, O man, to escape His frown.

The Divine Being has made nothing but that has been given a law whereby it is to be governed ; and every broken law has its penalty. If we look to the planetary system we find no planet moving at its own pleasure, but in obedience to the law of gravitation. Disobedience to this law would be universal disaster. If we walk through the vegetable kingdom we find that no part of vegetation is a matter of chance, but that the tiny grass seed and the little acorn germinate and develop—the one into waving grass and the other into the mighty oak—in accordance with a fixed law. If the demands of this law be met, your fruit-trees will flourish and bring forth fruit. The law requires not only

that the tree be unmolested by drouth or pestilence, but that proper nourishment be supplied. This nature has undertaken to provide. But have you not seen a tree get sickly? No insect was on it, and you were unable to account for its looks, until it occurred to you that possibly certain slops that were thrown around it might have affected it. Aye, that was it. From the pure soil the rootlets had hitherto gathered wholesome food, which, being conveyed up into the branches and elaborated, gave vitality to the tree; but now that which was unwholesome being mixed with the soil and received into the branches, a state of unhealth is produced.

This is humanity to-day. Thousands of good people, instead of flourishing and imparting blessing to others, are going about with pale faces, headaches, bad livers, dyspepsia, etc., simply because hygienic law has been transgressed. That apparently harmless thing that was taken into the stomach has been circulated throughout the whole system with withering effect.

Lord Byron sickened and died in middle life because he walked according to a vitiated appetite rather than a known law. Napoleon Bonaparte, the tread of whose armies shook Europe, died an early death because he knew better how to take a city than to rule himself.

Herein appears the first evil of such course, and its punishment. Men, good as well as bad men, bring disease, poverty, and death on themselves, when they had hoped to live long and happy. Not only so, but by example and hereditary laws their loved ones are made to suffer. Dr. Steele, in his excellent work on hygienic physiology, states that in some parts of England one-half of the children die before they are five years old ; and that at least nine-tenths of these lives could be saved by a simple observance of the laws of health. Is it not a fact that many households, even among the refined, are not as properly guarded—perhaps in critical periods—as is some of the choice stock on the farm ? We do not mean to insinuate that the stock is loved more

than the family ; far from it. But love is often blind and leads to mistaken kindness ; rich dainties are proffered, and high living indulged in to the baffling of medical skill, while horses and sheep are given only what is good for them. How much better is a man than a sheep !

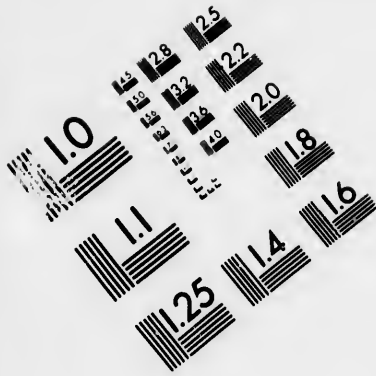
'Tis wisdom, O man, to "*know thyself.*" In the knowledge of this frame and the functions of the body, with due regard to the laws of digestion, circulation, respiration, and the nervous system, lies the secret of much happiness and longer life. To the good man, and even to the infidel, an inspiration to the obedience of these laws has been found, just in the working of the delicate organs, which speak so loudly of divine wisdom. Galen, a celebrated physician, who was a sceptic in youth, thus became convinced of a Supreme Intelligence, and studied the more to know himself, and by the same means to show God's wisdom, goodness, and power to others. "The heart is incessantly exerting its muscular power at the centre of the system and sending

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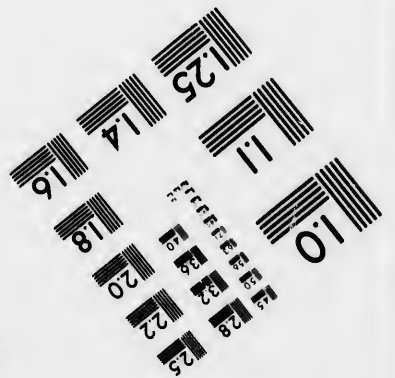
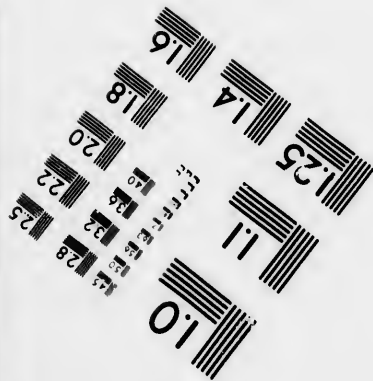
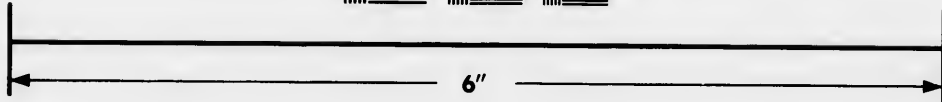
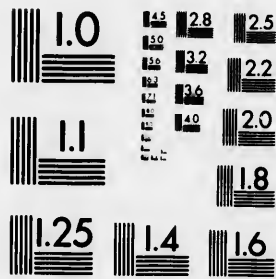
off streams of blood through hundreds of pipes ; the lungs are continually expanding and contracting their thousands of vesicles and imbibing the vital principle of air ; the stomach is grinding the food ; the lacteals and lymphatics are extracting nourishment for the blood ; the liver and kidneys drawing off their secretions ; and the perspiration issuing from millions of pores." Now, when in addition to this, we consider that health depends upon such a numerous assemblage of moving organs, and that it is in our power to preserve their healthy action and increase our longevity, or, by heedlessness, to derange these functions and bring on disease and death, how much more ought we to be inspired to obey the divine law within us.

The Scripture magnifies our being, and lifts up its voice against all intemperance, whether wine-bibbing, unsanctified feasts, or refined (?) gluttony at home ; and so many are the sources of knowledge to-day that no abuser of nature's laws should plead ignorance, much less indifference.

Yet how many are disregardful and bring upon themselves the dreadful consequences. Professor Bennett stated in a lecture at Edinburgh that about 100,000 die annually in Great Britain from causes easily preventable. Such mortality is certainly not less common here. Some of our best American physicians estimate that at least seven-tenths of the physical suffering of the people is caused by inattention to the simple laws of health. We eat anything, and at any time; do anything we please, and sit up any number of nights with little or no sleep. As Dr. Talmage put it recently, when speaking to his congregation of the unhealthy habits adopted by some of our good citizens at the watering-places of the land: "Families accustomed to going to bed at ten o'clock at night, sit gossiping until one or two o'clock in the morning. Dyspeptics, usually very cautious about their health, mingling ice-creams, and lemons, and lobster salads, and cocoanuts, until all the gastric juices lift up their voices and protest." At our hotels, in the dining-



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car, or on the steamboat, such intemperance is common. Soups, fish, meats, custards, pies, wines, nuts, oranges, raisins, etc., are poured into the stomach *en masse*, without regard to quantity, digestion, or mastication.

Nor does this indifference as to proper diet cease in every day sociality. Do your friends call to see you? Custom says, "Bring on the cakes," and of course "one might as well be out of the world as out of fashion" (afraid to do the right); so the table is spread with highly-seasoned food, rich puddings and pastry, mince pies, plum pudding, plum cake, etc. We admire some of these warm hearts—no pains is spared to make one happy—but through the perverted taste of the age, nearly every repast, instead of being a real kindness, has become a mistaken kindness; instead of life and blessing is offered disease and death—of which nearly all guests seem pleased to partake. If any conscientiously decline, the question is asked: "Are you troubled with dyspepsia?" (as though one ought not to regard his

health until he is sick); and rather than be thought dyspeptic, whether they are or not, some of these dear people thankfully (?) receive all that is set before them.

Neither does this custom stop with the social hour. The family meal is by no means a stranger to this health-destroying business. A table spread with food highly seasoned, pork, hot bread, pickles, short cake, pies, etc., and steaming with tea and coffee, is a common sight. "What harm is there in it?" you ask. Well, who am I, my friend, that I should inform you that there is no harm, when physiological science demonstrates to the contrary? And who are you, dear reader, that you should reject the testimony of this science, in the face of the medical world, which is virtually a unit on this matter? You do not reject the testimony that the earth revolves on its axis once every day, yet it is vastly more of a wonder than that grease, spices, sweetmeats, etc., should be hurtful to the stomach. You believe the astronomer when he

tells you the awe-inspiring fact that this planet is carried forward in space at the rate of more than 60,000 miles an hour, or over 1,000 miles a minute ; but you reject a less astounding fact as testified by a science which, in the opinion of some, has revealed even greater wonders than has that of astronomy.

While men continue to ignore these important laws, it need be no wonder that such diseases as consumption, catarrh, gout, rheumatism, dyspepsia, scrofula, etc., are heaped upon us, and that we are left exposed to cholera and other diseases which take the form of a plague. Some people laugh about the "mistakes of Moses," but "the selections and disapprovals of the law of Moses, as written out two thousand five hundred years ago, in reference to articles of food, are just now confirmed as being the wisest and best, by the most advanced school of scientific dietists." Striking facts support this decision. During the prevalence of cholera, so recently, in Marseilles, France, the Jews were so free from the epidemic as to seem to lead a charmed life.

They had studied and observed the dietary rules of Moses. It is said that insurance companies all prefer risks on Jewish lives, as they know that the average life of the Jew is from thirty-six to forty-two years, while with other nations it is only twenty-five to thirty-two. Would not the hygiene of the Bible, with whatever help science may afford, be to us a valuable study?

It would, perhaps, be unwise to classify definitely the various articles of food, and say that this is good and that is bad—such would not hold in all cases, some of the articles herein mentioned being found good under proper restrictions—but we would emphasize the importance of studying general principles. By so doing, not only might we lengthen our lives, but save ourselves the misery of a diseased body. Few of us are so invalid-like naturally but what there is some little spark of soundness left, which, if preserved by medical skill, accompanied with a due regard to diet, apparel, cheerfulness and exercise, would spread its healthful influences and invigorate the whole system.

But, alas, how many feed the disease as much as they do the spark of life that is in them! The old story of the mince pie will represent thousands of cases to-day. "A farmer who was in the habit of eating one-fourth of a mince pie before retiring for the night, became annoyed with unpleasant dreams, and among the varied images of his fancy he saw that of his deceased father. Becoming alarmed, he consulted a physician, who, after a patient hearing of the case, gravely advised him to eat *half* of a mince pie, assuring him that he would then see his grandfather."

By improper and irregular diet, and by hard work immediately after meals, whether in the harvest-field, at the washtub, or with the mind in the study, the digestive organs are overtaxed, and the poor jaded stomach failing to do its work, a general derangement ensues, which, of course, is a mysterious visitation of Providence (?) and the doctor must be sent for at once. What folly! But little better than the supposition of bygone days—that disease was caused by evil

spirits! Modern science teaches men that disease is not a thing, but a state. "When our food is properly assimilated, the waste matter promptly excreted, and all the organs work in harmony, we are well; when any derangement of these functions occurs, we are sick." The best physicians are becoming to have diminished confidence in medicine itself, and to place greater dependence upon sanitary and hygienic measures. If they give medicine it is simply to hold the disease in check that nature may have a fair chance, when, if her laws be observed, she will repair injuries, and restore harmony.

The physician's prescription for good health would be, diet properly, bathe regularly, exercise freely, laugh heartily, and don't be ashamed of an overcoat. Even the cholera he would have baffled, not by medicine, but by clean streets, good drainage, etc., with attention to the measures already noted.

Will we disregard these advices? Then not only will we subtract from the length of our years, and suffer weary days and nights of aches

and pains, but will be burdened with an enormous expense. That government that does not adopt and enforce strict sanitary measures will experience, in addition to the suffering and death through some plague, a heavy financial pressure. So it is in family government, but this expense is actually paid for in clear cash ; in other words, men pay cash for disease and the privilege of a doctor's bill. Some may not see it in this light, and yet they feel it. How many feel keenly the great expense of living to-day, as compared with days gone by ! What benefit have we in return for this extra outlay ? Plainly none, but weakened constitutions, patent medicines, and doctor's charges. If for no other reason, we should abandon this pampering because it is opposed to self-interest, it brings poverty, disease and death.

A higher and more important reason why we should give heed to these things, is that such intemperance defaces the temple of the Holy Ghost, vitiates our moral powers, and hinders the Gospel. The suffering and disease we have spoken

of is not the suffering and disease of a being like a horse or an ox. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" 1 Cor. vi. 19. "As truly as the living God dwelt in the Mosaic tabernacle, so truly does the Holy Ghost dwell in the souls of genuine Christians; and as the temple and all its utensils were holy, separated from all common and profane uses, and dedicated alone to the service of God, so the bodies of genuine Christians are holy, and all their members should be employed in the service of God alone." Next in importance to the soul should be the care of the temple in which it sits enthroned with God. Did God mark and keep a record of every piece that was put into the temple at Jerusalem? So in His book every member of this temple is written. Psl. cxxxix. 16. Did He punish those who desecrated the Jerusalem temple? So will He scourge those who pervert the laws of the temple of the Holy Ghost. We suffer dreadful consequences here; what it will be in the judg-

ment we cannot tell. Doubtless many will wake up to the fact that the atonement does not cover all the sins for which they profess ignorance.

Conscious are we that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. But the term "righteousness" implies in itself not only holiness of heart, but rectitude of life; therefore we sing—

" Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee ;"

Take my hands, my feet, my voice, my lips, my silver and gold, my moments, my intellect, my will, my heart, my love, and if there is anything more it is contained in the last two lines—

" Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, *all* for Thee."

And this is scriptural. "Ye are not your own." 1 Cor. vi. 19. "Therefore, whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Dr. Talmage says: "Whether we shall keep early or late hours, whether we shall eat food digestible or indigestible, whether there shall be thorough or incomplete mastication, are

questions very often deferred to the realm of whimsicality ; but the Christian man lifts this whole problem of health into the accountable and the divine." He says : " God has given me this body, and he has called it the temple of the Holy Ghost, and to deface its altars, or mar its walls, or crumble its pillars, is a God-defying sacrifice."

God required the Levites to offer in sacrifice to Him nothing that was imperfect or diseased, and from this all nations should learn that God expects of us the very best sacrifice we are able to give. When He asks that our bodies be presented a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, He would have us refrain from every hurtful thing, and walk as becometh children of the light. To hear some people talk, you would get the impression that neither bone, nor muscle, or any bodily organ, had to do with spiritual interests ; but God says, " present your *bodies* a living sacrifice." He would have them meet temples of the Holy Ghost, by whose agency they are to be renewed, and preserved for the accomplishment of divine purposes.

It is the belief of not a few, that as Christianity develops, physical life will be improved; and this belief is based on Scripture, and demonstrated by fact. We may not attain unto antediluvian longevity. Adam lived 930 years, Methuselah lived 969 years; but of the Christian God says, "With long life will I satisfy him." Psa. xci. 16. In a sermon from this text Dr. Talmage very truly says: "The fact is, that men and women die too soon." He speaks of there being, at one date, during the time of Vespasian, and in his empire, some forty-five persons 135 years of age; and of one Peter Zartan, in the sixteenth century, who lived to be 185 years old, showing that down to but a few centuries ago some traces of long life were to be found, and that but for the withering effects of sin, whose bonds Christianity has only begun to snap asunder, we would not be so degenerated in body as we are to-day. Referring to Isa. lxxv. 20, "The child shall die a hundred years old," he asks, "May not the men and women reach to three hundred, and four hundred, and five hun-

dred?" and declares that "we are mere dwarfs and skeletons compared with some of the generations that are to come."

It is but a little over a century since the dungeons of Satan were fairly broken into and the work of regeneration and purification commenced, but men are beginning to see that the religion of the soul is good for the body, and the Bible and medical science are joining hands for the healing of our race. One Mr. Frederick H. Nash has given the information that in the State of Connecticut there are over 6,000 persons who are over 80 years old. Of these 600 are more than 90, and of those over 100 there are 120. Now, by His salutary influence upon our lives, this being the work of the Holy Ghost who is in us, can we not see and feel how wrong it is, even in the smallest sense, to injure these bodies?

God promises that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick" (James v. 15); but let none presume to pray for healing with closed windows, thin shoes, pinched waists, ungoverned appetites,

etc. As consistently might one pray for forgiveness and continue in blasphemy. Take your hand out of the fire if you want to be healed.

By our disobedience we rob God of a strength He had designed to use, and thus defeat the most noble purposes concerning us.

This we do, not only by subtracting from physical strength, but by a weakening of the moral powers. Many are ready to say that the matter of diet is one of small importance as far as their spiritual life is concerned, but they understand not what they say.

The three elements, body, mind, and soul, into which philosophers represent man as being divided, contribute each to the health or unhealth of the other. The cultivation of man's moral nature will best contribute to his physical and mental well-being. A man of loose morals is very apt to abuse his body. "Godliness is profitable unto all things," etc. And unless we charge God with creating a faculty the development of which tends to weakness and death, we must believe mind culture to be helpful to the

physical, and the lives of philosophers clearly prove that it is so. Also a strong mind is conducive to moral stability. It helps one in mapping out a right course.

In like manner the physical contributes in turn to these higher faculties. "A sound mind in a sound body" is a maxim whose truth none can doubt. W. H. Prescott, Cardinal Richelieu, Dr. Samuel Clarke, Paley, and others, scrupled not to engage in innocent sports that their bodies might be made equal to the mental strain which they endured. (Amusement, sanctified to such a noble purpose, with an eye to moral usefulness, is praiseworthy rather than otherwise). Mental vigor requires physical force, and we have seen that moral stability is affected by the strength or weakness of the mind, therefore are our moral faculties influenced by the state of the body.

Our whole system is bound together by a network of nerves, called the sympathetic system, so that "if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it." The drunkard first experiences a nervous excitement, then muscular, and next

mental weakness, along with which comes a failure of the moral sense ; conscience is lulled, reason enfeebled, and sensibilities blunted, continually lessening the ability to appreciate nice shades of right and wrong, until moral principles lose their power to influence, and the better nature has lost its supremacy.

Now, although not so manifest, yet just as surely is our moral nature affected by what we eat. Take a very common instance. A man overloads his stomach at dinner on Sunday. Two o'clock comes, and he says : " Well, wife, I ought to go to Sabbath-school, but I feel so drowsy." The moral faculties prompt him, but his mind is sluggish through the abuse of the body, the judgment fools with duty, and the man stays at home. That is the experience of thousands. It seems a small matter at first glance, but stop, stop and think. That influence weakened stability of purpose in your scholars, as well as in yourself ; and oh ! what if eternity should reveal that on that day a Robert Morrison or Abel Stevens was in your class ! A small

matter? Let the world say so if it will, but let not the Christian call that small which the inspired pen thought wise to discuss. God meant something when He enjoined fasting and abstinence. The Apostle meant something when he commanded, "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Do all to the glory of God! "Yes," said Dr. Steele, "it is a grand thought that we can thus transform that which is common and gross into that which is refined and spiritual; that out of waving wheat, wasting flesh, running water, and dead minerals, we can realize the glorious possibilities of human life." Ignorance or indifference as to this fact has worked untold mischief. The great moral evil with which our world is cursed is represented as coming upon us through the sin of tasting—whatever that means. No sooner had Eve partaken of the forbidden fruit and given to her husband, than their moral faculties were tarnished, they blushed for shame, sought covering for themselves, and showed less delight in the Divine presence. Ex. xxxii. 6

and 1 Cor. x. 7 show how surely the moral nature is affected by the abuse of our eating privilege. The people of God sat down to eat and drink; they rose up to play, dance, and sing; they committed fornication, and brought upon themselves the vengeance of God. Multitudes are doing this to-day. By feasting, made respectable, men and women derange their bodily functions, the mind suffers through sympathy of the brain with the stomach, irritable feelings and peculiar temptations spring up, and the moral powers find it difficult to preserve their equanimity; many are actually led captive by their animal passions.

By the use of condiments, the stomach is often irritated, the nerves excited, and a desire for such stimulants as tobacco and strong drink induced. As a church, would we not adorn our consistency if, while condemning the beer stand for its immoral tendencies we would look well to the evil that proceedeth from more refined centres? Is a snake any the less a snake because he is not a boa-constrictor? Let no man

be deceived. God will rise up in judgment against us for this intemperance which would fain hide its deformed head under the cloak of the Church.

O, the subtilty of Satan to hinder the Gospel ! Has he not robbed us not only of physical, mental, and moral strength, but also of the means which God has placed in our hands for the spread of His truth ? Who of us can lift up innocent hands ? What have we spent even for tea, coffee, and tobacco ? Stop, brother ! stop, sister ! and think a moment. Statistics inform us that of tea alone the people of England use annually 170,000,000 pounds. Now, reckoning that we use only at three-fourths of that rate, and that tea is only 50 cents per pound, our population being about one-ninth of theirs, our expenditure for tea would be over \$7,000,000—nearly as much as the whole Protestant world contributes to missions. What a showing ! Add to this various other dining-room luxuries, and then consider, is this for the glory of God ?

A minister once said to me, " Why, you don't

expect every word and act to be done to the glory of God." To all such persons I will now reply in the words of Rev. J. L. Corning: "If there is just one thing which I have a right to do, but which I cannot do for the glory of God, then, in respect to that one thing, I have thrown off allegiance to God, and set up an independent government of my own. That thought is a javelin plucked from Satan's quiver, a firebrand out of hell, and if the Almighty would let it spread itself, it would leave His throne a heap of smouldering ashes." Men make a great ado if their tea is not provided, but when these things are spoken of in a religious sense, they are astonished that "Eternal Wisdom" should have cognizance of such a matter. Ah, brethren, He who marked the widow's mite, and promised even that a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple should not lose its reward; He who commanded that the crumbs be gathered after the feeding of the multitude, that nothing be lost, what will He say of the thousands wasted by littles, and the thousands wasted in

the spreading of great feasts to gratify the desires of the flesh ?

Is it any wonder that Wesley preached : “ Do not waste any part of so precious a talent merely in gratifying the desires of the flesh ; in procuring the pleasures of sense of whatever kind ; particularly in enlarging the pleasure of tasting. I do not mean, avoid gluttony and drunkenness only ; an honest heathen would condemn these. But there is a regular, reputable kind of sensuality, an elegant epicurism, which does not immediately disorder the stomach, nor (sensibly at least) impair the understanding ; and yet (to mention no other effects of it now) it cannot be maintained without considerable expense. Cut off all this expense ! Despise delicacy and variety, and be content with what plain nature requires.”

As Methodists we would do wisely to look to our Discipline, p. 104 : “ Do you use only that kind and that degree of food which is best for both body and soul ? Do you see the necessity of this ? Do you eat no more at each meal than

is necessary? Are you not heavy and drowsy after dinner? Do you use only that kind and that degree of drink which is best for both body and soul? Do you choose and use water for your common drink?" The import of this is couched in one short sentence, and placed in the "General Rules," which every Methodist has promised to observe, and which being scriptural, all others would do well to observe: Continue to do good "by all possible diligence and *frugality*, that the Gospel be not blamed." O yes, this is sound doctrine, it is Methodistic, it is scriptural. Do you find no pleasure in it? Then to God, and not to His humble servant, let your complaint be made.

By our disregard of these things, what dullness, what reproach, what hindrances have we brought upon ourselves? How many Christian men and women who might be valiant for the Lord are worn out by dyspepsia and chronic melancholy? How much of the purest truth and highest eloquence, even that of the inspired Word, has fallen from the pulpit with little

effect, because of an indisposition of preacher and people through want of fasting? How many children who might have made class-leaders, Sabbath-School superintendents, or burning lights among the heathen, have had their vitality undermined by the luxuries of the dining-room? How many missionary subscriptions have received cents when they ought to have received dollars? Eternity will answer. Brethren, let us awake. The Lord give us light. It will be a grand period in the history of Zion when we make it our *delight* to eat, drink, sleep, speak, and think for God. That time is coming. "In that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts." Zech. xiv. 20. Holiness everywhere! In the dining-room, in the drawing-room, in the office and in the shop shall the glory of the Lord be displayed.



CHAPTER VI.

ECCLESIASTICAL AMUSEMENTS.

IN the preceding chapters we have directed the attention of the reader principally to the great waste of means consequent upon this want of self-denial, and thirst for worldly show. Following in the train of this is another evil, which has become appalling in its nature, and threatens us with destruction. In consuming our money upon our lusts we are reduced to such a state of selfishness that we are no longer willing to pay our debts, but instinctively depend in a large measure on the world and questionable methods for Gospel support. To show how great is the error into which we have fallen, the Rev. Dr. Marvin kindly contributes the following:

As we come to the annual period of multiplied church entertainments, such as fairs, festivals, concerts, tableaux, amateur theatricals, etc., I wish to utter some words of testimony to God's professed people, concerning these methods of winning the heart and purse of the world :

These methods of raising money for the Lord are *all contrary to the precepts and examples of His Word*, and, therefore, they cannot please Him.

They are counterfeit methods of giving and cultivate bogus benevolence.

The simple method of free-will offerings alone is approved, and all other methods are virtually condemned. (Study Ex. xxxv. 5, 21, 29 ; 2 Cor. viii. and ix. ; Luke vi. 35 ; and Matt. x. 8.)

One-tenth, or more, cheerfully and directly given, was the law of Old Testament stewardship, and it is the privilege of the New.

What if Moses had instituted a grand carnival or bazaar to draw the surrounding heathen into his camp and get means to build the tabernacle.

How would it comport with the character of the early Christians to read in one of Paul's epistles a suggestion that the saints at Corinth get up some amateur theatricals or Isthmian games to raise money for the poor saints at Jerusalem ? or an exhortation to Lydia to stir up the godly women of Phillippi to get up a grand fair, festival or baby show, with all our latest modern devices ? Man's method may procure more money, but God's way will procure the greater blessing. No other way can be acceptable to Him.

These unblest devices *are belittling, contemptible, and sometimes positively dishonest.*

It is almost a shame to even speak of them in detail. What shall we say, what would the Master say, of a bevy of vain and bedizened young ladies, fascinating and cornering susceptible young men, to sell them commodities above value and which they do not want ? What of the many devices like grab-bag, fish-pond, ring-cake and raffle, involving the gambling

principle? What of the Church of God peddling out small wares and fun to the world? or getting up a variety show or milk-maid's drill to replenish her treasury? How belittling to the Church, how dishonoring to God, and how contemptible in the eyes of the world!

Said an infidel to me: "I think your God must be in great need of money, by the tricks the churches practice to get it for Him." Many of the pious grieve over these things and hang their heads for shame. Even those who aid and attend these performances cannot well approve them. Why have they not conscience and courage enough to witness against them? No intelligent Christian can ask God's blessing upon such practices, nor expect it to rest upon money so procured. Says the *Christian*:

"The primitive churches had their 'agapæ,' or 'feasts of charity,' or love, where social intercourse of a strictly religious character was enjoyed by the disciples of the Lord. Instead of these ancient and pious festivals, we are now

accustomed to a class of social gatherings of an entirely different character, which are inaugurated and perpetuated for the special object of obtaining money. Concerning them, a writer remarks as follows: 'At almost every street corner for the last few days we are hailed with, 'Don't you want a ticket to the — festival?'''

“When church members are truly converted to God, and have a religion that goes pocket-deep, there will be no need of calling in the flirts and fops and loafers of the town to dicker over rag dolls and India-rubber babies, and other tomfooleries, to raise money ‘for the support of the gospel.’” If churches cannot live without dishonoring the Lord, then let them die decently and speedily, and when such cumberers of the ground are cut down, there may be room for other trees that will bear good fruit. And if ministers of the gospel cannot be supported without resorting to such means to obtain a livelihood, let them go into worldly business with their backslidden churches, and leave their

room for men whom God has really sent to preach His Word. The commissioned messengers of Almighty God, sent to warn a slumbering world of approaching judgment, will not be dependent upon such sources for their support. This whole system of supporting religious worship by the sale of jimcracks and the giving of entertainments is a fraud. A religion that cannot be sustained without such devices is not worth sustaining, and the ministry which is dependent for its support on this sort of 'backsheesh,' begged from the votaries of the world, the flesh and the devil, is a disgrace to the gospel which it professes to proclaim. It is almost like sending Christ out begging bread of His enemies.

When the blood-bought Church of God, with all her store of wealth, resorts to such miserable shifts to get help from the world, what must wordlings, with their lavish outlay for the pleasures of sin, think of the value of our salvation? Rev. R. M. Patterson, D.D., of Philadelphia, a remarkably observant and intelligent pastor, says :

“ One particularly disgraceful phase of that general inconsistency of the Christian life which is so harmful to the progress of Christ’s cause, may be noted—the growing disposition to administer churches as if it was a part of their mission to provide entertainment for the people. Fairs, concerts, comical lectures, oyster suppers, turning the dedicated house of worship into a place of hilarious amusement, are fearfully demoralizing to the religious life. They dispiritualize the people ; merge the high sense of obligation into pleasure-seeking ; blot out that line of demarkation between the Church and the world, which cannot be destroyed without debasing the one and affording rare comfort to the other in its sins. The piety of congregations which tolerate such things has lost the high old Puritan type. They are full of weaklings, with itching ears and sensual stomachs, who measure a church by its amusement-producing capacity. In the end no congregation gains by having them.”

These methods *abate and corrupt the spirit of gospel benevolence in the Church and bring it under bondage to the world.*

Instead of acts of "worship" and exercises of benevolence they are scenes of carnal revelry and selfish pleasure.

They foster the worldly spirit of self-indulgence instead of the Christian spirit of self-denial, as designed by the institution of alms-giving. They are tricks of traffic with the Lord, and devices by which to give Him "what costs us nothing."

They are "giving made easy," patents for the convenience of stingy saints.

If men cannot be persuaded to give to the Lord, "hoping for nothing again," in the spirit of willing and cheerful benevolence, we have the best reason to believe that He does not want them to give at all. Luke vi. 35; 2 Cor. ix. 7; Matt. x. 8.

The *Sunday School Times* waxes satirical, and with good cause, in speaking of the modern Sunday-school drama and church fair :

“And now, brethren, let us get up a supper and ‘eat ourselves rich,’ said a witty Presbyterian elder, in keen satire on the church fair plan, when his church was proposing indirect methods of raising money for new and necessary expenditures. ‘Buy your food,’ he said; ‘then give it to the church. Then go buy it back again. Then eat it up, and your church debt is paid.’”

If that is the best way of getting all hands to contribute to a good cause, by all means let it be introduced into the churches for every Sunday service. Just think of it! The deacons or vestrymen pass around the boxes on Sunday morning; at the same time they offer to serve refreshments to all who give liberally. The pastor at his desk repeats appropriate sentences meantime. For example: *Pastor*: “Give, and it shall be given unto you.” *Deacon* (reaching out the contribution box to a stranger in the congregation): “A plate of ice cream goes to every person who contributes twenty-five cents or more. Can you help us this morning?”

Pastor: "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth." *Deacon* (to the father of a family): "A bag of peanuts goes to each child who contributes not less than five cents; lemonade to the father. Let all take hold to-day. We need the money." *Pastor*: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." *Deacon*: "Tickets for the young people's entertainment only ten cents."

That is the church fair idea. If it works well in one place, why not in another? If it is the way of promoting God's cause on week-day evenings, why not make it available for the same cause Sundays?

Can there be any doubt as to the folly of this double-faced indirect method of trying to raise money for the Lord's cause, in contrast with the straightforward, honest appeal to men to give of their substance to Him on whom they depend for all things?

These methods are especially designed to draw money from the purses of "outsiders," and thus spare "insiders"; but we should remember that

the world, the flesh, and the devil, claim a mortgage on all institutions which they help to support. We should not expect Satan to help pay for the weapons with which we assail him, nor allow the house of God to be divided against itself. The world expects its stock to vote in a church as well as in a railroad corporation. If we beg of the world to help us support the church we must allow the world a measure of control in it, and it will gradually become "a church of the world." Besides, it would greatly promote the spirituality and usefulness of many churches if their vain and showy extravagances were curtailed. Better be without silver or gold, with apostolic power, than as we are.

Rev. C. H. Parkhurst naively says : "One of the strongest points in the early Church was that they had so little money." What little property they had was controlled by deacons and not secular trustees.

Many of these practices are *evil in their desecration of our places of worship.*

Even if we do not regard places now as consecrated, like the temple, all agree in the expediency and importance of hallowed associations.

After the memorable scene of Transfiguration, Peter calls the place a "holy mount." Reverence in worship is naturally connected with reverence for the sanctuary of worship. Certainly the spirit of the law in Lev. xix. 30: "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary; I am the Lord," has never been made void. But what undevotional associations must linger on Sunday in the sanctuary where we lately attended a "neck-tie and apron social," or saw the Sunday-school children play "Cock Robin" or "Mother Hubbard."

After a literary entertainment in one of our churches I asked a friend, to what the church was dedicated? He replied, "We dedicated it at first to the Lord, but last night we dedicated it to Shakespeare, Dickens, and Bret Harte." The law to tax churches that are used as play

and pay houses is just and equal. Our solemn ceremony of dedicating or consecrating buildings to religious instruction and worship, is manifestly a sacred farce if they are to be used as play-houses or club rooms.

Fair and Festival, frolics untold,
Are held in the place of prayer ;
And maidens, bewitching as syrens of old,
With worldly graces rare,
Invent the very cunningest tricks,
Untrammelled by gospel or laws,
To beguile and amuse, and win from the world
Some help for the righteous cause.

Christ twice cleansed the temple of abominations far less offensive than these, and if He were here we may be sure that nothing less severe than a whip of small cords would suffice.

Amateur dramatics to please the world and put money in the purse of the Church, *silence the testimony of the pulpit against the stage, and even promote its interests.*

The theatre has always been a school of immorality, from the time when the Greeks sang and danced around their wine-god Bacchus

until now, and these performances are training schools for the play-house. A young man who had been employed in a Brooklyn theatre told me that he received his first training and taste for the stage in Sunday-school concerts. We can only present a little rude dramatic art, which whets the appetite for the real thing, breaks down barriers, and swells the throng of saints and sinners at the opera and the theatre. Men reason that it is better to witness the legitimate drama by artists than the illegitimate by amateurs. The Romish Church of the Middle Ages abolished the "Mysteries and Moralities," because they found no good, but evil, resulting from dramatizing any part of the sacred Scriptures. Those who favor such realistic exhibitions of sacred scenes and characters upon the stage, may soon see their views consummated in the "Passion Play."

What possible good can result from these juvenile exhibitions of elocution and song, finery and vanity, flowers and gilt pasteboard? They

do indeed "draw" immensely, but not to the truth or to Christ.

Indeed, the more you draw to these "variety shows" the less you can draw to "dull preaching," and the more money you get in this way the less you will get in God's way. They make "worldliness" and not "Christianity" attractive.

Our Sunday night "Choral Services," and "Sabbath-school Concerts," advertised as "Entertainments," are really feeders of the opera and the theatre, and not counter attractions, and probably a strict enforcement of law would close both.

Ten times as many of our young people in the Church go to the play-house and the dance, as when this era of counterfeit giving and ecclesiastical amusements began. Our course should be separation, consecration and concentration.

These practices turn the Church aside from its legitimate and heavenly calling, and fritter away its spirituality, its time and energies.

The Church was purchased by the blood of Christ for no such secular, trifling, or corrupt purpose. The Church is not designed to be a bureau of amusements for the world, strew the broad way with flowers, and cheer on the world's frolic to perdition. It is her mission to save "our young people," and God does not bless such means, directly or indirectly, to this end.

The devil can make his own fun for his subjects, and our young people, trained in good principles, are capable of entertaining themselves. The effort to remove "the offense of the cross," make Christianity attractive to the carnal heart, and convert the world by conforming to it, is diametrically opposed to the Divine plan, and it is rapidly converting the churches to the world. The Church has made its grandest conquests when most holy and separate from the world, so that God could work through her, and the world could see something to be converted to. Christianity has its repulsions, and the Church ought to be holy enough to expel the unholy.

“We study to please,” is the motto of the stage, but “We study to save” is the motto of the Church. The Church is to be a Christ-witnessing, light-bearing missionary agency. It is a Divine propaganda, and it has no apology for its existence in any other character.

Christ and the Apostles never dreamed of making almsgiving or preaching an entertainment. The Church in its corporate state has but one thing to do.

Other institutions can excel it in traffic and entertainment. It can excel them only in holiness and usefulness. The *N. Y. Herald* gave as a reason why Methodism is declining in New York City, that preachers could not be expected to run dime shows and small theatres, and succeed in preaching the gospel. “The Church is not a trader, though its members may be. It is appointed to a mightier work than dabbling in tapes and pin-cushions. Its appointment is to divine communion and the saving of souls. It has a psalm to sing, whose volume reaches

the throne, but it has no groceries to sell. There is not a command, allowance, or example in all the Holy Scriptures that makes the Church a merchant, or tells it to pay its way by holding a fair. The method of supporting the work of the Church is by beneficence, and not by trade. Beneficence—a principle heaven-higher than mere generosity—is the direct gift of a saved heart, and from the holy motives of a saved heart to the cause of God. None other is accepted of God to or from His Church.”

In fine, these methods of ecclesiastical amusement and money-making *blight the spiritual life, influence, activity, and usefulness of the Church, and promote almost every species of carnality and worldliness.*

They open not merely a wide door, but the whole broad side of the Church, and invite the world to free and easy fellowship, if they will only help to support the Church.

As the Church is now drifting, careful and conscientious parents may soon have to with-

draw their children from its society to keep them from dancing, theatre-going, card-playing and other corruptions. The Colored Churches of the South are imitating us with most pernicious results. In the Holy Spirit, and with trumpet tone, we utter our solemn declaration and testimony, that this new ecclesiastical dispensation of frolicking and mirth is absolutely contrary to the truth and spirit of our holy religion, corrupting to the Church, ruinous to the world, and offensive to God. We are purchased, separated and sent into the world for Christian work, and not play. When we magnify the spirit of play and amusement to please our young people, we make them "lovers of pleasures," but not "lovers of God."

Study such Scriptures as Ezekiel xxxiii., Acts xx., 1 Thess. v., Titus ii., and James iv, and learn the serious import of this present probation in its relation to eternity.

Salvation is not a selfish luxury, but a tremendous trust. It cannot be propagated in fun, avarice or ease.

Study the lives of Christ and Paul, and see if you find in them this "spirit of the times" so regnant in many churches. These lax views, this picnic religion, this go-as-you-please life, cannot possibly coincide with the religion of Jesus Christ. Most of these play-people of the Church have no clear, firm, and influential faith in the creeds to which they have subscribed, and they despise discipline. They propose to "make religion attractive," but they most of all make it appear gloomy, by their manifest disrelish for all spiritual things and their frenzy for worldly pleasures at any price. No wonder Mr Beecher calls them "monsters" of inconsistency. They constitute no part of the true Church, but are merely a dead weight of baptized worldlings. Professing godliness and practising worldliness, they are making more infidels than all our enemies outside the Church.—Phil. iii. 18, 19. The gospel demands an earnest life. The doctrine of universal immortality and a conditional salvation is the most

solemn and tremendous faith ever conceived. It is the great pending concern of the universe, and if men will not give their money cheerfully and liberally to this cause, we may fear that they have no part or lot in it.

The gospel presents both the brightest and blackest possible future for humanity—morning and night, love and wrath, punishment everlasting and life eternal. The worldly policy of attracting the world by conformity and fun is of recent origin, but it has been tried long enough to prove a wretched failure. The vast and formal visible Church scarcely exerts the strength of her little finger for the world's conversion. Her "mixed multitudes" are "dangerously rich," but she takes to pleasure, and merely plays at missions, giving her shreds and crumbs, which cost her nothing. The Church has no relative advantage over apostolic times in the propagation of the gospel.

Our "modern improvements" are just as available to our enemies as to us. It cost the

early churches something to propagate the gospel, and it must cost us something. Self-sacrifice and earnest missionary zeal are just as necessary now as then. In life we are to be neither ascetics nor worldlings. We "rejoice in the Lord always," but have fellowship with a suffering Saviour in His great and self-sacrificing mission. We should be earnest and true, even if we sometimes appear blue. We should save many out of the world, if we do not always please worldlings. If we sometimes use vinegar instead of molasses, it is because we deal with bad men and not silly flies.

Already have these crooked methods of counterfeit benevolence impaired and corrupted the beneficence of the Church to a fearful extent. Our treasuries and spirituality must suffer more and more from these ways that are "nigh unto cursing." The Bible principles and method of giving, for redeemed and consecrated stewards, may be clearly seen. The Pentecostal Blessing made money plenty.— Acts ii. 45.

Will churches that have exhausted their wits and energies on other methods now try this ? Will the Church, for the sake of God and humanity, own up its folly and forsake it, come out from the world and be separate, take on a higher type of piety, cultivate the genuine grace of giving, and give the old gospel a fair trial in God's appointed way ?

O Church of Christ, redeemed by precious blood,
Break this alliance, glorify your God !
Forsake the Christless world that lures to ill ;
Thou mayest be blest and prove a blessing still.
Away with ease and dalliancy and play,
The great commission now in haste obey ;
In holiness and zeal thou canst excel,
And save the perishing from sin and hell.
Gird on thy robes with purity impearled,
And keep thyself unspotted from the world.
Humbled in dust and ashes, sin no more ;
Repent, while Christ stands knocking at the door.
Oh, let thy heart be true to Him alone,
For lo, the heavenly Bridegroom cometh soon !



CHAPTER VII.

THE DEMAND OF THE HOUR.

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.”—Mark xvi. 15.

NOTHING is there of so much importance before the Christian world to-day as the execution of the above commission. This is the burden of our soul. For this cause we are come unto this hour.

The motto of every living Church is, “The world for Christ.”

Unquestionably, there never was a time when greater advances were being made; but with enlarged borders has come increased responsibility. It is one thing to step into new fields, but quite another thing to indoctrinate the people and establish the work. “Missionaries ought to

be multiplied ten-fold in Syria, Persia, Egypt ; a hundred-fold in Turkey, India, and Japan ; a thousand-fold in China, Africa, and the Papal States." Our workers are raising the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us." These new fields into which the Church has gone are not uncontested. The agencies of darkness are combined to oppose the truth. It is a fight between the forces of evil and the forces of God. In India, but recently, there were over one hundred newspapers opposing the march of Christ, and earnestly advocating paganism and Mohammedanism. Lucknow and Cawnpore have a large number of publishing houses largely engaged in printing against Christianity ; and not a few of the wealthier class cheerfully give of their substance to spread the books of their religion. One Mohammedan is said to have given \$4,000, and one million Hindu tracts are said to have been published at the expense of one Hindu prince.

In this country of 254,000,000 population, equal to that of all Europe without Russia, there

is but little more than half a million Protestant Christians to stem the tide of darkness and idolatry. "No country is so distinguished by the number of its temples, shrines, and symbols of idolatry as India." Idols of wood and stone occupy every prominent place, even in the smallest villages. The Rev. George Patterson, D.D., speaks of a consecrated spot, Benares, where, within a radius of ten miles, there are two thousand temples, with shrines and idols numbered by the hundred thousand. This is supposed to be a part of heaven let down to earth, and so sacred do they deem it that any person dying there, whether clean or unclean, goes to some heaven. Mr. Bainbridge speaks of the worship here as being a most revolting picture, all so unspeakably vile that self-respect commands retreat.

If we look to Buddhism, scattered over northern, central, and eastern Asia, and other parts, and to the devil-worshippers of Siberia, our hearts cannot but be stirred within us as we

think of the depths to which the sons of Adam have sunk, and from which they must be lifted by Christianity. Of the Buddhist religion, Mr. Gilmour, as quoted by Patterson, testifies that "its practical effect is to delude its votaries as to actual guilt, to sear their consciences as with a hot iron, to call the wicked righteous, and send men down to the grave with a lie in their right hand." Buddhism is branded by Sir John Bowring for "its selfishness, its disregard of others, its deficiency in all the promptings of sympathy and benevolence." The system induces such inhumanity that, while regard is had lest by accident anyone should kill an insect, and while apes and sacred pigs are fed in the temples by the priests, "men and women are left to die of starvation on the streets, and their bodies to be devoured by dogs in the very neighborhood of their sacred buildings." No religion on the continent of Asia, it is said, has left its votaries in a lower moral condition. Corruption, in its worst form, exists throughout the millions of Buddha's followers.

Turning to China, with her 400,000,000 of souls, a nation of such antiquity and marked achievements as to call forth deep admiration in him who reads, we are again met by a moral darkness revolting in the extreme. Here the influence of heathenism has been thought to be less debasing than among many races, but, says Mr. Williams, "They are vile and polluted in a shocking degree, their conversation is full of filthy expressions, and their lives of impure acts."

The religion of Confucius is most countenanced by the Government, but the majority of the common people adhere to Buddhism. This remarkable people, it is found, once had the conception of one living and true God and Personal Ruler. But they glorified him not, and to-day they are sunk in the lowest polythesim. Mr. Williamson, while speaking of them in the highest terms as the imperial race in the far East, adds: "It is true at present they are in a most deplorable condition. Their old principles of government are disregarded; the maxims of

their classics utterly ignored by the generality of their rulers ; rapacity and corruption pervade every department of the State, even to a far greater degree than foreigners ever imagined." As to the future, after due observation, confirmed by the testimony of the ablest Europeans and Americans in Peking, he says, " There is no hope for China in China itself. The nation must become more and more corrupt, unless some external element be introduced to save it."

The ineffectiveness of their boasted civilization or religious system to induce any real humanity is manifest in the barbarous penalties for broken law. One of them is thus described by the editor of the *China Mail* : " It means being tied to a cross, and then subjected to tortures so fiendish that even the North American Indian has never invented anything more horrible ; for the death agony is prolonged through such operations as flaying the face, cutting off the breasts, excising the muscles, nipping off the fingers

and toes, and finally disembowelling the wretched victim, who, even then, has been known to manifest signs of life."

From this awful degradation we turn, hoping, but in vain, for a much more improved state of moral principles and humane feelings when we look to other quarters of those dark lands. Japan, with a population of 34,000,000, while the most vigorous efforts are being put forth for her evangelization, is yet bound by the delusive systems of Confucius, Buddha, and the original system of the country, Shintoism. Of the people as a whole, the Rev. S. G. McLaren states, "They are a depraved and licentious people."

To give an account of the fiendish inhumanity of Africa and Polynesia, as given by Dr. Patterson—from whose essay on missions our quotations are taken—would be simply appalling. The Negro population of Africa, numbering some 120,000,000, is in all the darkness of heathenism, and abomination of slavery and cannibalism. Of the slavery, Dr. Livingstone says: "To ex-

aggerate its enormities is a simple impossibility." An index to the ferocity of cannibalism may be found in the fact that in one of their sacred houses were found many hundreds or thousands of skulls, while in some parts the tribes display their savage craving by stringing the teeth of the victims about their necks, and hanging the skulls on stakes about their dwellings. In the language of a missionary, as given by Dr. Patterson, "At this day the Negro race stands before the world in a condition disgraceful to itself and humanity. Divided into innumerable tribes and languages—without literature, laws or government, arts or sciences,—with slavery for its normal social condition, and the basest and bloodiest superstition in the world for religion,—a religion without reference to God or their souls, to sin or holiness, to heaven or hell, and even without the outward insignia of temple, priest or altar,—it has sunk so low as to be regardless alike of conscience and shame, to reckon a man's life at his market value as a beast of

burden, and to practice cannibalism, not from want, but revenge and a horrid lust of human flesh."

Polynesia is yet a darker hue of cannibalism. "All society in those dark regions is indeed a Dead Sea of pollution."

Such is the condition of the races to which our Gospel is being sent. How strange must be the beliefs—our space will not permit notice of them—that cause men to recognize as deities the most inferior objects of creation; that call for acts of worship cruel and unclean; that lead to practices of abomination and bloodshed.

Verily it is a great work to overthrow these superstitions, that righteousness may be firmly planted. But be it believed or be it rejected (we speak not unsupported), the greatest hindrance to missions to-day is in the Church of light at home. What! the Church of God unmoved at so many of their fellow-creatures in such pollution? "Actions speak louder than words." "Hundreds of congregations give not

one dollar to missions." And taking the churches as a whole, we have shown in the preceding chapters that for either dress, unnecessary diet, or tobacco, we far exceed what we give to send salvation to the heathen. The following is a clipping from the *Christian Guardian*, as taken from the *Methodist Protestant*: "The Christian world is only playing at missions. We are children with our wooden blocks and sawdust babies. The aggregate sum seems large, but put it beside that spent for drink, or tobacco, or finery, and it dwindles into nothingness. A few mission stations are dotted over the heathen lands, and a few missionaries are giving their lives away among them; but take our resources, and what a pitiable spectacle it is! Nothing but Christian illiberality is in the way of the world's conversion, so far as it is a subject of promise."

A bright example for us may be seen in an expedient recently resorted to by General Booth of the Salvation Army, which led to the prac-

tice of one week of self-denial throughout that body in England, and, notwithstanding their poverty, brought to the treasury for gospel purposes the large amount of £5,000. "Men denied themselves new boots and trousers, and women did over old bonnets and dresses for the winter, sending the sums which new ones would have cost to the fund. One enthusiastic band of 'officers' and 'soldiers' stayed in 'barracks' after morning meeting on Sunday, and ate bread and butter to save the cost of Sunday dinners. Many denied themselves sugar in their tea, and others a visit to the Colonial Exhibition. Others, who were not enrolled soldiers, abstained from beer and tobacco, and one lady who was visiting during the week, hit upon the singular expedient of requesting her host to give her in cash what would be expended in chickens and other luxuries for her entertainment. What would be the result to our embarrassed missionary treasury, if the Methodists of the Dominion would for a single week

deny themselves their accustomed luxuries simply, and add the amount so saved to their usual contributions."—*Christian Guardian*.

As a Church, we not only waste money that ought to be given to missions, but we are guilty of encouraging that waste in others, and thus helping the devil to rob God. "The ladies of America actually spend more for artificial flowers each year than do all the churches for the spread of the Gospel." For ladies' foreign dress goods is expended annually the sum of \$125,000,000, and New York alone is said to expend \$30,000,000 for kid gloves. Aye, says Dr. Talmage, "Ten cents for the missionary cause, and \$2.50 for trappings! Diamonds enough to give the Gospel to India." Again he says, "The American Church gives not \$3,000,000 a year for the salvation of the heathen, and American Christians smoke \$5,000,000 worth of tobacco."

As to table extravagance, we have no estimate of separate items, but who will doubt that tea,

coffee, and pastry does not far exceed the expense of tobacco? And (though it may apply to many with less force), let it be spoken aloud, with condemnation, on the authority of a Christian lady in Albany, whose communication appeared in one of the leading Church papers, "It is an open secret that ladies in Albany—ladies who, at the altars of Christian churches, promised to renounce the world, etc.—ladies of means, culture, and prominent social position—spend from one to two hundred dollars annually in support of a pet dog." This ungodly waste, we are told, is by no means uncommon at some of the fashionable watering-places, where ladies (?) pay by the week for the board of a puppy, giving it choice porterhouse steak, etc. What is your idol, dear sister? Brethren, what idol have we?

We do not refer to these things with a disdainful, taunting spirit, but to reveal simple facts. Where is our spirit of sacrifice? Hundreds of millions for finery, etc., and only \$9,-

000,000 for missions. God bless those who give and labor! To the rest may hearts to feel be given. Look! look again to those dark lands. Over eight hundred millions of our race groping for the light, worshipping they know not what. Millions upon millions never so much as heard of a missionary, or of the name which is above every name, and are dying with reason to say, "No man cared for our soul." In China alone 33,000 die daily; as many as live in our Dominion buried every four months. Think of it! Is this a time to jest and display jewelry? In an hour of such tremendous responsibility, who can say that it is a small thing to seek our own pleasure?

Come a little closer to these perishing ones. Let the street in front of your door be the dividing line between you and them. Look at them. "No Sunday, no churches, no schools, no charities, no gospel"—women as slaves and beasts of burden—millions feasting on their fellows—whole races, to do something to satisfy the

immortal nature that is in them, bowing down to idols of wood and stone? Could you stand close to that border, with the Bible in your hand, and, Sunday after Sunday, tell how you love Jesus, without making any more effort to "rescue the perishing" than you do now? Your conscience would smite you. Get down on your knees, and pray "Thy kingdom come," and then let the mission paper pass by without your name! What a contradiction!

O beloved, have you Christ? Then ought you to show the spirit of Christ. He left His throne and came to a manger; laid by a kingly crown for one of thorns; put off His robes of royalty for a covering of blood; from halls of plenty He came to suffer the pangs of hunger in the wilderness. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." "Though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor." "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to

lay down our lives for our brethren. 1 John iii. 16." Let that man count his Christianity very superficial, who is willing to sacrifice self for the "lost" and dying. The fulfilling of the law is, in one word, even this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." These souls are our neighbors—they are beaten and fallen by the wayside. Are we the good Samaritan, or the priest and Levite? The fact of their being distant from us, does not make them any less our neighbors; nay, they are more than neighbors, they are brothers. "God hath made of one blood all nations of men."

Could we be aroused from our stupor, and get some conception of the brotherhood of man, who would not be on flame to rescue at least one soul. O for the burning zeal of Dr. Coke, who gave his life and \$30,000; or that of Dr. Duff, who in his last hours, when he could stand with difficulty, desired to be supported on the platform that he might plead for the heathen. Possessed of such a spirit, "counterfeit" methods will no longer

be a necessity to us. A young lady of one of our towns, not long since, being thoroughly imbued with the missionary spirit of her Master, offered herself to the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, and was appointed to India. When asked if she had any preference of a field, with beaming countenance she replied, "*Anywhere* with Jesus." In her last prayer-meeting, with fond associations about her, she sweetly said: "Jesus is more to me than parents, and home, and friends, and I gladly give up all for Him."

Now we are not all called to be missionaries, or to preach from the pulpit, but we believe that all are as surely called of God for Gospel extension as is the minister. Be you a farmer, merchant, mechanic, seamstress, housekeeper, or what else, your time and talent and substance are as much required by the Lord as was the talent of that young lady for India. "Ye are not your own."

Sisters, you can't all go to India, but what possible sacrifice can you not cheerfully make

when you think of your benefits in the gospel? Think! O think of the degradation of your sex in these dark lands, and let your hearts be inspired with a holy enthusiasm to loose them from such thralldom by the power of a living gospel.

Possess yourselves of the spirit of Mrs. Wesley, Judson, or Fletcher, even the spirit of your Master, and let men be likewise self-denying and obedient unto divine wisdom, and how soon would a flame be kindled at home, and the glad tidings of salvation be heralded afar; the frowning walls of scepticism at Calcutta, and Bombay, and elsewhere, would be as the walls of Jericho, and the host of the Lord would move forward. Let this theme of evangelization become the burden of the family altar, and the weekly prayer-meeting, and with consecrated possessions who can tell but that before another half-century "the last tyranny will fall, paganism burn its idols, Mohammedanism give up the false prophet, Judaism confess the true Messiah,

the great walls of superstition come down at the long loud blast of the gospel trumpet ; and with a splendor of demonstration that shall be the astonishment of the universe, God will set forth the brightness, and pomp, and glory, and perpetuity of His eternal government." The darkness is widespread and dense, covering nearly two-thirds of the earth—some nine millions on our American shores groping in the blackness of heathendom—but there are bright *spots* in all the horizon, even on the shores of cannibalism.

Church of the living God, let the responsibility of the hour fall upon you ! Look to the north ! Look to the south ! Look to the east ! Look to the west ! " Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest. Behold I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields ; for they are white already to the harvest."

OBSERVATIONS.

"Bro. Laing's little book speaks plainly on some most important matters affecting the spiritual life of our people. It takes the broad and solid ground that practical everyday life and common affairs have to do with personal holiness; and that this personal holiness is indispensable to spiritual and evangelistic power. It will do people good to read it. It will do the Church great good to heed the Scriptural positions clearly taken in it."

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